



**Anne-Mari Aalto-Samateh**  
Diaconia University of Applied Sciences  
Master of Social Services  
Community Development and Conflict Resolution  
Thesis, 2020

# **UNPROTECTED FAMILIES –**

**Research on the well-being of families in irregular migrant situation in Finland**

---

## ABSTRACT

Anne-Mari Aalto-Samateh

Unprotected Families – research on the well-being of families in irregular migrant situation in Finland

66 pages, 2 appendixes

December 2020

Diaconia University of Applied Sciences

Master of Social Services

Community Development and Conflict Resolution

The topic of this thesis is the well-being of migrant families in irregular situation. The study gives an insight on family life in irregular situation in Finland. The aim of the study is to develop discussion on the reality of families in irregular situation: what motivates them, what gives them strength and what kind of communities they have. The thesis was done in collaboration with the Unprotected Community Project working under the Helsinki Deaconess Foundation. The data collected in this thesis project was used as a validation of effectivity of the project in their final report. The interview participants were parents who live in irregular situation in the capital area and were using the services of the Unprotected Community project.

The methodological approach of the thesis was qualitative. The data was collected through semi-structural interview and analysed through thematic analysis. The theoretical background of the research leans on the Good Relations policies introduced by the Ministry of Justice Finland. The Good Relations policies aim to promote equality and prevent discrimination. One of the aims of the thesis was to give the undocumented themselves a chance to voice out their situation. This was reached through the interviews.

From the interviews three initial themes were determined – trust for change, future prospects and grievances of the system. In addition to these themes, the support systems were studied. The themes rising from the interviews were compared to the Good Relations policies. Based on the research, the need for support and understanding of the processes became visible. The participants emphasized the difficulties of the system and the complexity of their situation. Family and children were seen as important strengths and motivators in the irregular situation and the parents highlighted how they would do anything for their children. Despite how difficult the situation might seem, the participants highlighted that it is still better for the family in Finland than in the country of their origin.

In conclusion, the research shows that one of the main ways of tackling irregular migration is to make sure the undocumented understand their own rights and opportunities. The solution to reduce the number of migrants in irregular situation is to give them more realistic opportunities to change their situation. This can be achieved, for example, through changing the attitudes towards the irregular migrants and realising them as an asset rather than a deficiency.

**Keywords:** Good Relations, Irregular migration, Well-Being



## CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION .....	4
2 PREVIOUS RESEARCH .....	6
3 THE UNPROTECTED COMMUNITY PROJECT .....	8
4 IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN GLOBAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT .....	11
4.1 Why irregular migration is a question of human rights? .....	12
4.2 How terminology affects irregular migration? .....	15
4.3 Irregular migration in the Finnish context .....	17
4.4 Experiencing irregular migration .....	19
5 GOOD RELATIONS .....	23
5.1 Elements of the Good Relations Policies.....	23
5.2 Sense of community and well-being as a result of Good Relations .....	27
6 METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS DESCRIPTION.....	32
6.1 Research questions.....	32
6.2 Participants.....	32
6.3 Collecting data through semi-structural interview.....	33
6.4 Thematic analysis .....	35
6.5 The credibility and ethics of the research .....	37
7 FINDINGS .....	40
7.1 Trust for change .....	40
7.2 Future prospects .....	41
7.3 Grievances of the system .....	42
8 DISCUSSION .....	45
8.1 Families outside the system .....	45
8.2 Exclusion and politics affecting irregular migration .....	47
8.3 Structural racism and attitudes affecting irregular migration .....	51
9 CONCLUSIONS.....	54
9.1 Promoting Good Relations and Equality .....	54
9.2 View of the process.....	56
REFERENCES.....	59
APPENDIX 1. Consent form for interview participants.....	69
APPENDIX 2. Interview question form .....	70

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EU	European Union
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PICUM	Platform for international cooperation on undocumented migration
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	The United Nations Refugee Agency
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organization

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Example of the asylum process	p.11
Figure 2. The Elements of Sense of Community	p.28
Figure 3. Initial themes	p.36
Figure 4. Developing themes	p.37

## LIST OF PICTURES

Picture 1. Relations between population groups	p.24
Picture 2. Indicators of Good Relations	p.25

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Irregular migration is a growing trend in the European Union. Inequalities, climate change, armed conflicts and natural disasters increase the global migration and the destinations of migration tend to be from global south towards north, even though south to south migration is also highly common (Crawley 2018). Year 2015 was a turning point in migration in Europe when Europe received 1 322 800 asylum seekers compared to year 2014 when the number was 627 000. During the 2015 refugee crisis Finland received 32 476 asylum seekers. Most of the asylum seekers in 2015 were coming from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Only a small part of the asylum seekers from 2015 has a refugee status or a residence permit in Europe today, and some of them are still waiting for the decision; the rest are in a situation where they can either return to their country of origin, resettle in another country or stay in the country undocumented. For some, staying in Europe as undocumented was the best option of many bad options and they chose to stay as undocumented. (Eurostat 2016; Ministry of the Interior Finland n.d.)

After the refugee crisis in 2015, undocumented migration and migration in general, has been a common subject in public discussion. Migration has become even more of a political topic and irregular migration, the rights and responsibilities related to it and the place of the governments and European Union have become a matter of debate. Irregular migration is a current phenomenon and research on the topic has been a growing trend. This research is concentrating on giving a voice to the undocumented themselves. Previous studies have not grasped this topic in such a way, especially in the Finnish context. In research and in public discussion, the reality of families and children in irregular migration tend to stay hidden in the background. In this research the aim is to develop discussion on the reality of families in irregular migration through participating the undocumented themselves.

The undocumented migrants represent a variety of people, from small babies to elderly people. Being undocumented makes a person especially vulnerable and brings a risk of being abused, and uncertainty on income, housing and the overall future of yourself and your family stresses out undocumented persons in everyday life. Being undocumented also increases inequality and effects on the undocumented person's ability to affect in their own lives. In public discussion the undocumented are easily

seen as foreigners and outcasts, who cross the borders in order to stay in a new society and abuse the welfare systems. The phenomenon of globalization, migration and global social problems increasingly challenge nations and develop a gap between the ones who emphasize the equal rights for everyone regardless of nation and those who see the nation's first and foremost responsible for their own people.

One of the aspects influencing the phenomenon of irregular migration is the terminology and how the irregular migrants are talked about in the public discussion. Könönen (2014, 41) has pointed out that the term immigrant tends to hide the reality of the process, which the immigrants need to face while waiting for permanent papers or nationality. In this research the term migrant is used instead of the term immigrant because it describes the situation more accordingly. The terms irregular and undocumented are used to describe the situation the migrants are living in. The term 'illegal' is not used in this research as it is not accurate and it categorizes the undocumented migrants as illegal, which they generally are not.

This research is done in collaboration with the Unprotected Community project working under the Helsinki Deaconess Foundation. The data collected in this thesis project will also be used as a validation of effectivity of the project in their final report. With this thesis project the undocumented migrants are given an opportunity to voice out their situations.

## 2 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

As a part of the research a literature review was conducted, and the aim was to determine what kind of research has been made relating to well-being of undocumented families; how their voice has been heard. What was found out is that this subject is relatively new in research and there is not much data available, especially in European, and more precisely, Finnish context. Jauhiainen, Gadd and Jokela (2018) also state that one major dilemma in irregular migration in Finland is specifically the lack of research. The lack of research affects how the phenomena develops and how the situation can be monitored and assessed.

In the United States undocumented migration is a more researched phenomena (e.g. McNevin 2011; Hearn and Bergos 2011; Sanchez 2018; Kerwin and Warren 2018) than in Europe and most of the information available relates to the United States context. In the United States the phenomenon is relatively different than in Europe as in the US undocumented migrants have been coming from the central American countries since the independence, but in Europe the mass migration from Africa and middle east is more recent. In Europe, the current mass migration is also something that is stretching the societies differently than in the US.

On the European Union level irregular migration has become a current subject of research, especially after the refugee crisis of 2015. EU has published a research-based proposition on the fundamental rights of migrants in an irregular situation in the European Union (2011) which give guidelines in working with the undocumented. Both United Nations and the UN Refugee Agency have done research on the irregular migration. In addition, the Platform for international Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants has done extensive research on irregular migration, considering different aspects and the situation in different countries. All these have provided information in multiple languages and have done research in different contexts.

In the Finnish context, irregular migration has been studied for example by the Helsinki Deaconess Foundation and the Paperittomat project, which was conducted during years 2012- 2017. The Paperittomat project has provided a guide considering the health services of the undocumented (2013) and a publication on the right to education for the children in irregular situation (2014). Helsinki Deaconess Foundation has



published several articles considering irregular migration and its different aspects. In the Finnish context there is also relatively many thesis and pro gradu-research conducted on irregular migration in the past years (e.g. Todorov 2017; Repo-Saeed 2020; Oja 2019; Elo 2017; Drischenko & Kyyhkynen 2020). Miriam Tedeschi (2020) has performed an ethnographic research on undocumented migrants in Finland, gathering data for 9 months both from the undocumented and from people working with them. Especially during the past few years, the topic has become more researched. Jauhiainen, Gadd and Jokela (2018) have done an extensive research of the irregular migration situation in Finland through interviewing the municipalities. There is also relatively much information available about the health aspect of undocumented migrants e.g. how undocumented migrants seek for health care and about the legal framework affiliated with the health topic.

Through this research it became clear that research about the undocumented families has not been conducted much, especially through participating the undocumented themselves. Research made by interviewing the people working with the undocumented could be found more but in the Finnish context was not found much research where the research would have been based on data from the undocumented themselves. The lack of research where the voices of the undocumented is heard is something where this research aims to answer; give voice to the undocumented themselves and highlight the reality of undocumented families.

### 3 THE UNPROTECTED COMMUNITY PROJECT

The Helsinki Deaconess Foundation is a non-profit organization that aims to work boldly for human dignity, focusing on those people who are at risk of social exclusion. The Foundation was founded 1867 and today together with their subsidiary Diakonissalaitoksen Hoiva LTD, the foundation provides social welfare and health services throughout Finland and collaborates with a range of municipalities, companies, and communities. (Deaconess Foundation. About us.)

The United Nations Global Compact initiative states that corporate sustainability starts with the company's value system and a principles-based approach of doing business. In Helsinki Deaconess Foundation this means operating in a way that is effective on society level, economically, ecologically, socially and in an ethically sustainable way. The Foundation pledges to work in a manner that meets fundamental responsibilities in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. The guiding principles of the foundation are their values of Christian background, vision of building sustainable well-being and mission of dignity for all. The Helsinki Deaconess Foundation acknowledges that human rights are not simply met because they are given, but they need to be used and maintained in everyday life. Human dignity is the key of operating and it includes securing the basic needs of people, maintaining humanely adequate life and strengthening the self-determination of individuals. (Deaconess Foundation n.d.)

The Unprotected community project assists undocumented people by providing community action and support. The project offers psychosocial support, counselling, and service guidance as well as information about remaining in Finland without a residence permit. The Unprotected community project provides services in a day center, the Al Amal -center, where people can come to rest, prepare food, use the shower, and do their laundry. The project has also been working in the communities where the undocumented are suspected to move, in order to reach as many as possible. (Deaconess Foundation. Undocumented people. The Unprotected.)

The aim of the project is to answer the needs of the undocumented and help to prevent a community of people without legal protection to be born. Mikkola (2019) describes that the undocumented especially need adequate and understandable infor-

mation on their rights, services they are entitled to and the overall process of applying for residence permit and comes to the conclusion that undocumented migration can only be prevented by offering help and guidance, which is exactly what the Unprotected community project aims to do. Oja (2019) comes to the same conclusion as Mikkola and states, that the solution to reducing the number of migrants in irregular situation is to give them more realistic chances to change their situation. The irregular migration situation requires clear legislation, clear political policy definitions and guidelines for authorities as well as simply a better understanding of the irregular situation and their rights. The only solution to irregular migration is not returning the people into their country of origin. More likely that will cause different kind of migration and even increase the amount of the undocumented. Merry, Pelaez and Edwards (2017) conducted a literature review on the experiences of parenthood in refugee, asylum seeker and undocumented migrant families, in which one of the themes rising from the migrant parents was the need for more information regarding their rights, eligibility and availability of support and services. The migrant parents requested more information about the systems of education, welfare, social services, health and child protections as well as their legal frameworks and expectations about parenting. (Mikkola 2019; Oja 2019, 57; Merry et.al. 2017.)

The staff members in the project have immigrant background, which helps them to interact with the clients in their own native languages. The staff members have been able to build a trustful relationship with their clients and the clients turn to the staff members in situations where they need guidance. For many undocumented they are an important contact in working with the authorities. The undocumented often come from traumatic backgrounds and their situation makes them especially vulnerable in the society. They might not have understanding on their own situation or means of changing the situation, they might not have a realistic view on their own process or why the residence permit was declined. In order to decrease the number of undocumented, they should be offered clear options and means to reassemble their lives.

The Al Amal-center has provided the undocumented with humane circumstances and helped to develop coping mechanisms for them to encounter their future situations. The activities and community support have helped the individuals be more self-aware and they have understood their possibilities better. The Unprotected Community projects report indicates that especially during year 2019 a change could be seen

in the undocumented as an interest to seek for a job and by that finding a way out of being undocumented. The undocumented have transformed from being passive to active participants. The number of residence permit applications have increased during the year 2019, especially based on work. (Mäki 2020, 8-9.)

During year 2018 the Al Amal- center had 1695 contacts and in 2019 the number increased to 6027. This indicates that the undocumented have made the center as a daily routine and come there to spend time as well as to seek guidance. The staff members together with volunteers have been able to build a relationship with the clients. The clients feel that the atmosphere is positive, and they can be themselves in the day center. The staff members are described as first people in Finland the clients can truly trust. (Mäki 2020, 9.)

The project has managed to strengthen the physical, psychological and social well-being of the clients. Every client has had the chance to participate as much as they see necessary and as much as they feel comfortable with. The project has managed to build relationships between the clients and the clients have become important peer support networks for each other. The participants feel that they have learned means to cope in everyday life as well as planning their future. (Mäki 2020, 11.)

The Unprotected Community project has also worked together with different organizations as well as government actors. One of the agenda of the project has been promoting the reality of undocumented people in media and public discussion. During year 2019 the media has produced articles and highlighted the themes of undocumented migration, partly thanks to the efforts of the Unprotected community project. (Mäki 2020, 14-17, 23.)

#### 4 IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN GLOBAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

Migration has different pathways and some lead to becoming undocumented. In general, an undocumented migrant is a person coming from outside of EU, Eta-countries or Switzerland, and who has no legal papers in the country of residence. (Ministry of the Interior Finland n.d.) The undocumented have no legal place in the country of residence, which forces them live outside the system. There is multiple reasons why and how a person becomes undocumented; the person might come to a country with a tourist visa and stays in the country after it has expired or the person might come with adequate documents like a visa in another Schengen country or even a valid residence permit, but decides to stay in the country after the permit has expired.

A person can become undocumented also through the asylum pathway. The Geneva Refugee Convention from 1951 as well as other international human rights treaties and EU legislation are the basis of international protection. A person may seek international protection from persecution by applying for asylum, after which the authorities investigate whether that person has the right to be granted asylum. (Boswell & Geddes 2011, 128; Hiltunen 2019, 247-254; Ministry of the Interior Finland. Maa-hanmuutto. Turvapaikanhakijat ja pakolaiset.)

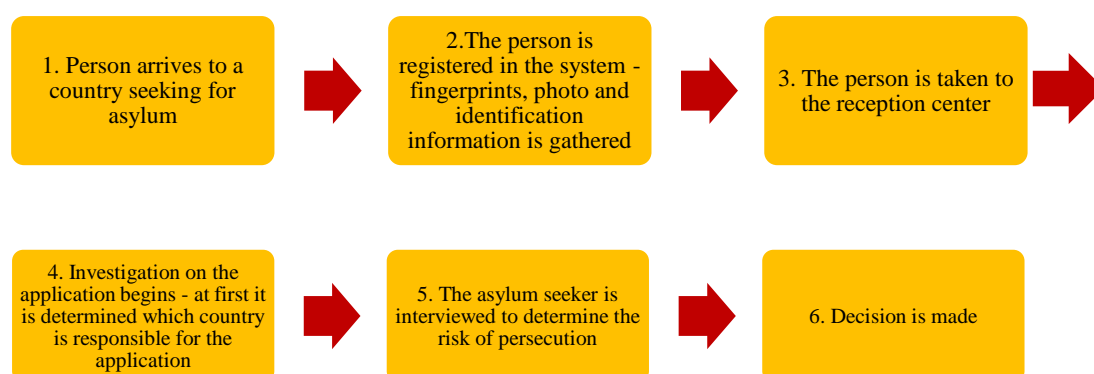


Figure 1. Example of the asylum process

Figure 1. presents an example on the proceedings when seeking for asylum. There are three possible outcomes after the decision. 1) If the decision is positive, the person is granted asylum and becomes a member of the society, the person becomes a refugee. 2) If the decision is negative, the person has an option to make an appeal, and the process is investigated again. 3) After the final decision, if negative, the per-

son can voluntarily leave the country and return to the country of origin, or the person can stay in the country and become undocumented. If the person is not granted asylum, the authorities can investigate whether the person is entitled to subsidiary protection. Subsidiary protection can be granted if the person is threatened by danger, e.g. the danger of death penalty or torture. (Boswell & Geddes 2011, 128; Hiltunen 2019, 247-254; Ministry of the Interior Finland. Maahanmuutto. Turvapaikanhakijat ja pakolaiset.)

The Dublin regulation is an EU law that determines which EU state is responsible for the examination of an asylum application; asylum can be applied for in only one country either in an EU State, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland or Liechtenstein. According to the regulation, the responsibility of the application will be addressed on the country in which 1) the applicant has family members, 2) the applicant has had residence permit or visa, 3) the applicant has first arrived in, or 4) the applicant has previously applied for asylum. The aim of the regulation is to make sure that each asylum application gets a fair examination, and it operates on the assumption that every country provides similar levels of protection, as the asylum laws and practices are united. (UNHCR n.d; European Commission. Migration and Home Affairs. Country responsible for asylum application (Dublin).)

#### 4.1 Why irregular migration is a question of human rights?

Human rights are the rights human beings have by virtue of being human. Human rights are universal, and they belong to everyone regardless of the persons ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, age or any other type of labelling. Human rights are not granted to us by states or anyone else, and they cannot be removed or denied. They belong to everyone without any duties and human rights are something that a person cannot lose, and no one can take them away. Discrimination is linked to marginalization of specific groups and can be described to be at the root of fundamental structural inequalities in a society. The recognition, enjoyment and exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms is restricted when discrimination takes place. (O'Byrne 2013, 26-28; Freeman 2017, 120-122.)

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights highlights seven human rights issues that concern especially irregular migrants: 1) health care, 2) rights to educa-

tion, 3) labour market, 4) housing, 5) family reunification, 6) security measures, and 7) the situation of those irregular migrants who cannot be returned to their country of origin. The European Union states do not have homogenous policies on irregular migration, which makes the situation of irregular migrants different depending on the country they are residing in. In many countries the policies and the services provided are limited in order to make the country less attractive for migrants. (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2011.)

Human rights are interdependent, indivisible and interrelated – when one right is not met, the others are affected. The next paragraphs will concentrate on three aspects of human rights which affect the lives of irregular migrants – the rights to health, to nation and to education.

“The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition”.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
1966/§12

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, article 25) states that everyone is entitled to such standard of living, which assures adequate health and well-being, including medical care and necessary social services without any kind of distinction. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966, article 12), as quoted before, states that everyone has the right to enjoy “...the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health”. The International Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965, article 1) adds, that no difference should be made between citizens and non-citizens. (OHCHR 2020a; OHCHR 2020b; OHCHR n.d.)

The right to health is dependent on other human rights like the rights to food, to water, to adequate standard of living, to adequate housing, to freedom of discrimination, to privacy, to access to information, to participation and to benefit from scientific progress. Health, both physical and mental, enables a person to learn and work, it gives one a chance to be influential in the community and participate. The control over your own health and body is part of the right to health and this includes access

to sexual and reproductive information and services. Nobody should be subjected to medical experimentation, forced medical examination, or given treatment without informed consent. Irregular migration exposes an individual to health risks, such as work-related health hazards in low paid jobs. Migrants and asylum seekers can have experienced burdensome travels, during which they may have been exposed to hazards and stress, including heat, cold, poor sanitation and lack of healthy food or safe water supply. Experiences on the journey as well as the lack of access to health care can have long term effects on the migrant's health situation. It has been determined that providing access to regular preventive healthcare for migrants in irregular situation would be cost efficient and would affect the well-being and health of both physical and mental health. (OHCHR n.d.a.; Al-Omar & Heikinheimo 2013; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2015.)

Statelessness is one of the major human rights violations the irregular migrants experience. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948) article 15 states *“Everyone has the right to a nationality. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.”* The right to nation is a fundamental human right but it is still not a reality for many migrants in irregular situation. The Convention on the rights of the Child article 7 states that a child should be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name and the right to acquire a nationality. In reality, many children in the world are considered stateless – as persons who are not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law. The children face statelessness mainly because gaps in nationality laws. All countries do not permit nationality based on birth alone (e.g. Finland) and if the country of origin does not allow a parent to pass on nationality through family ties (e.g. with some exceptions, Iran, Syria and Somalia) the child born becomes stateless. (OHCHR n.d.; OHCHR 2020; UNHCR 2020; Anderson 2014.)

Statelessness affects a person on multiple levels. Stateless persons are often denied their basic human rights, such as right to healthcare and education. Stateless persons are often marginalized, discriminated and are vulnerable to abuse and they are unable to participate in the society. (Vlieks, Ballin & Vela, 2017.) In Finland children are entitled to education and in some municipalities also health care is covered, but the effects of statelessness become visible for example in the lack of travel documents and identity card.



Every child should have a right for education – this is a basic human right determined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right for education is a fundamental human right and it is valid irrespectively of race, gender, nationality, ethnic or social origin, religion or political preference, age or disability. In Finland children in irregular migration situation have the right to education, but it is not compulsory like for Finnish nationals. Korniloff and Laine (2014) state that in some cases children have been delayed in starting of school and different kind of obstacles can be found in the participation in schools with undocumented migrants. The parents might be reluctant to send their children to school in fear of the family situation coming in the knowledge of authorities, the parents might not trust the confidentiality of the teachers and staff members, and the parents might not have the knowledge that their children are entitled to education. (Korniloff & Laine 2014, 11-12.)

The lack of residency in a municipality and the lack of social security number can also affect the schooling of children in irregular migration situation. In Finland, the Deputy ombudsman Maija Sakslin (2014) emphasized that every child has the right to education, whether they have residency in a municipality or not. She points out that the Finnish constitution gives the municipalities an obligation to organize education for all children, no matter of the term of residency in Finland.

#### 4.2 How terminology affects irregular migration?

The term ‘illegal immigrant’ was previously common in language, when speaking about undocumented migrants. Today, it has become fixed to use the term ‘undocumented’ or ‘irregular’ when talking about a person without adequate documentation. The term ‘illegal’ is considered not to describe the situation accurately and it is misleading in many ways and not adequate for use; as being undocumented itself does not constitute a crime in most countries and even in countries where violations of immigration law are considered criminal offenses, committing a criminal offense does not make a person ‘illegal’. The term ‘illegal’ also depicts migrants as dishonest, undeserving and plainly criminal, which affects the way they are treated. Criminalising undocumented migrants also prevents fair debate on the matter, as it does

not address the laws and policies which create irregularity, and it prevents informed and truthful debate on migration. (Picum n.d.)

An-Nai'm (1995) determines the underlying causes of human rights violations to be economic conditions, political expediency and structural social factors. In the discussion on irregular migration, the terms represent attitudes. Structural racism as a part of the society becomes visible in discussion on migration, which eventually affects the migrants themselves. Everyone has the right to exist and demand better quality of life for themselves and their family, but the structures of the society tend to come between the expectations and the reality. Migrants in irregular situation tend to be vulnerable for human rights violations, to which the terminology affects. Discrimination, exploitation and marginalization tend to affect their lives and they are denied their human rights, e.g. the right to nation, the right to health care, and the right to education, and fundamental freedom. Denial of civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights affect the everyday lives of irregular migrants. Term 'illegal' increases this as it is also considered dehumanising in the way it labels a person. It denies a person their dignity and human rights, as it ignores their experiences and personalities. Most undocumented migrants in Europe have lost their status as a result of exploitation, misinformation or administrative delays, not simply by committing an offense. Children can be labelled 'illegal' simply by being born. Under international law, everyone has a right to leave a country, including their own. Labelling all migrants trying to reach Europe through unofficial channels as 'illegal' is inaccurate and increases their exposure to prejudicial treatment. (An-Nai'm 1995, 19; Picum n.d.)

Jönsson (2014) interviewed Swedish social workers about social work with irregular migrants. From her research two different discourses were visible – the one considered the irregular migrants as victims of persecution and the other as illegal immigrants. The social workers were having contradictions between humane ethics and helping the undocumented, and their illegal status and informing the authorities. It could be noted also that the victim discourse was more often visible when talking about women and children in irregular situation, as the illegal discourse was more concentrated to men. Women were seen as objects who did not have a say in their own lives and were brought to undocumented situation by the men of the family. (Jönsson, 2014, 41-42.)

Although they [undocumented immigrants] know that they will not receive residence permit for staying in this country, they choose to come and live as illegal, it is their choice, and they should bear the burden of their free choices. We cannot solve everybody's problems.

(Social worker interviewed in Jönsson's research 2014.)

From Jönsson's research it became visible that the attitudes of the social workers affected the services they provided. The legislation makes the undocumented appearing as illegal, which is boosted by the attitudes of the authorities working with the undocumented. When a phenomenon is talked about as a security threat, it starts to become one and it creates a necessity to control it. In 2016 the Finnish interior ministry gave recommendations on preventing and controlling 'illegal' immigration in Finland by increasing surveillance and monitoring, as well as promoting voluntary and assisted return. This can be seen controversial in many ways, as in Finland the number of undocumented increased substantially because of the legislation change and the removal of the humanitarian residence permit category in 2016. In 2019 the Finnish interior minister Maria Ohisalo suggested that the undocumented could be surveyed by monitoring anklets, labelling them as someone who needs to be monitored closely, but at the same time she promoted for the change of attitudes when talking about refugees and refugee politics in media and public discussion. (Jönsson 2014, 41-42; Ministry of the Interior Finland 2016; de Fresnes 2019.)

#### 4.3 Irregular migration in the Finnish context

It is estimated that Finland has a relatively small number of undocumented migrants, when comparing to other European countries. The location of the country (e.g. it is not the first country where asylum seekers arrive), the number of existing migrants and the population of Finland might be reasons for the number staying smaller. The number of undocumented migrants is however difficult to estimate due to the nature of the phenomena. Because of the Schengen-system and the growth of international travelling it is relatively easy to transit from one country to another without adequate documentation. Due to the situation the undocumented live in, they tend to stay out of situations where their presence would come to the awareness of the authorities.

The estimations of the number of undocumented migrants are based on the amount of undocumented who have had contact with the authorities. In Finland, the number of undocumented is estimated to be around 3 000 to 4 000 persons in 2017 and since then the number has most likely increased. (Paperittomuudesta. Paperittomat Suomessa.; Jauhiainen et.al. 2018, 53.)

European Union states do not have homogenous policies on irregular migration, which makes the situation of irregular migrants different depending on the country they are residing in. In many countries the policies and providing of services is limited in order to make the country less attractive for migrants. In 2016 the so-called humanitarian residence permit was ended in Finland and those who were having a residence permit based on that became mostly undocumented. The humanitarian residence permits enabled asylum seekers international protection due to humanitarian reasons. Humanitarian reasons were for example armed conflict, environmental catastrophe or poor human rights situation in the country of origin. Persons coming to seek asylum but were not entitled for asylum by the UN refugee protocol or by EU directives were given protection based on these humanitarian reasons, because it was not human to return them to their country of origin. The humanitarian residence permit category was used in Finland for more than 25 years and officially it was initiated in 2009 when Finland still wanted to stand out as a country giving more than the minimum level of protection. (Markkanen 2018; Hiltunen 2019, 249-250.)

#### Section 19 -The right to social security

Those who cannot obtain the means necessary for a life of dignity have the right to receive indispensable subsistence and care. Everyone shall be guaranteed by an Act the right to basic subsistence in the event of unemployment, illness, and disability and during old age as well as at the birth of a child or the loss of a provider. The public authorities shall guarantee for everyone, as provided in more detail by an Act, adequate social, health and medical services and promote the health of the population. Moreover, the public authorities shall support families and others responsible for providing for children so that they have the ability to ensure the well-being and personal development of the children.

#### Section 22 -Protection of basic rights and liberties

The public authorities shall guarantee the observance of basic rights and liberties and human rights.

(A731/1999 The Constitution of Finland.)

In Finland different cities and municipalities offer different kind of services for the undocumented, and the humane treatment and human rights of the undocumented are met in different ways in the municipalities in Finland. Especially the situation of families and children in irregular migration makes them vulnerable for human rights violations. It is not defined in the legislation what kind of services the municipalities are required to offer for undocumented migrants, but the municipalities base their services on the Constitution of Finland (731/1999) which states that the public authorities have a duty to provide adequate social, medical and health services to everyone regardless of their documentation status. The Aliens Act (301/2004) defines asylum seekers and refugees, but it does not define those immigrants who do not have adequate documentation, so legally the undocumented have no official place in the society. (Jauhiainen et.al. 2018, 49-51.)

Jauhiainen et.al. (2018) interviewed all the municipalities in Finland about their experiences of working with the undocumented. The municipal managers emphasized that they see that the government is foremost responsible of the undocumented migrants and they see that it is the governments duty to find a solution for the situation. The municipal managers call for coherent, more precise and simplified directives on how to manage the undocumented. This would entail more equal treatment and would give the municipalities equal guidelines to working with the undocumented. Now even a single employee can define the situation of the undocumented they are working with, hence there is no guidelines. Some municipal managers see the irregular migration situation as a problem on the European Union level and the solutions should come from there also. The municipal managers also express that it would be beneficial to have the undocumented in the system somehow. (Jauhiainen et.al 2018, 49–51.)

#### 4.4 Experiencing irregular migration

Research shows that asylum seekers are commonly experiencing trauma before, during and after their journey seeking protection in the European Union and can be suffering from mental health problems when arriving and settling to Europe. This indicates that the migrants in irregular situation are also experiencing mental health problems, and due to their situation, they are most likely not having treatment. Trauma

can be defined as having experienced, witnessed or been confronted with an event that involves actual or near-by death experiences or serious injury, or threat to the physical integrity of oneself or others. Traumatic experiences include e.g. witnessing or experiencing a life-threatening situation; war; rape or sexual molestation; or childhood abuse or neglects. Pre-migration poverty and living in an adequate situation in the country of origin can also affect the mental well-being of migrants. (Bustamante et.al. 2017; WHO 2017; Sandalio 2018; Perreira & Omelas 2017.)

The mental health conditions of asylum seekers can inhibit the capacity to effectively present the asylum claims. In the asylum process the migrant need to have a rational, linear and coherent idea of the reasons why they moved from their country of origin and why they apply for asylum, as well as to have picture of how they will carry on their life in the new country. The outcome of the process can be affected if the person is not able to provide clear and organized reasons. When suffering from post-traumatic-stress-disorder or similar disorders, one can have difficulties remembering traumatic events and telling their stories in a way that assures the authorities. This together with stress and uncertainty can affect the situations of the asylum seekers negatively. In the asylum-process the credibility assessment is a fundamental aspect, through which the asylum seekers are required to prove their need for protection. The officer needs as much personal background information as possible, which may trigger dissociative symptoms such as memory loss and misrepresentation of certain situations, which affects the credibility of the claim. The lengthy asylum-process increases discrepancies in the narratives the asylum seeker provides as a proof for the fear of persecution. The asylum officers are mainly not trained to work with survivors of trauma, and hence they do not recognize the affects the mental health disorders or traumatic experiences in the decision making. (Tedeschi 2020; Sandalio 2018; Bustamante et.al. 2017.)

As an undocumented migrant, a person is not entitled to full health coverage and therefore the possible mental health issues are not treated appropriately. Excluding persons from access to health care affects early detection and treatment of preventable conditions. It increases the likelihood of health services only being contacted in case of emergency, and in terms of mental health problems, the services not being contacted at all. (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2015.)

Children growing up in an irregular migration situation are, with their families, one of the most vulnerable groups in Europe today. The Platform for international cooperation on undocumented migration (Picum) indicates that undocumented children are in a position of triple vulnerability: as children; as migrants; and as undocumented migrants. Undocumented children and families are facing a high risk of poverty, exploitation, social exclusion and violence. The children are withheld from their right to education, access of healthcare and adequate housing. Their family situation gives them a disadvantageous starting point to life, which affects their future in many ways. (Picum 2013, 5.)

Children are considered undocumented when their lives are affected by the irregular migration status. This category include children who live without a residence permit; who have overstayed visas or were refused immigration applications as a family; who have entered irregularly either alone or as a family; and who have a regular status themselves but live with undocumented parents. The situation is converse in many ways, as the children are affected by their parent's migration status, even if they themselves have adequate documentation. In some European countries' children are not required to have documentation until the ages of 16 or 18 and therefore in these countries the children cannot be labelled as undocumented. Parents can also be the ones having a regular migration status, but children have for example, come to Europe to be reunited with their family but have not succeeded under family reunification schemes. (Picum 2013, 13-14.)

Children in irregular migration situation are especially vulnerable as they are not registered in the civil registry. As they grow outside the system, they are not in the reach of child protective services. They might not have a municipality, which takes them out of reach of health services. In general, children in migration are exposed to many risks for example violence, physical abuse, exploitation, sexual abuse and trafficking and being separated from their families. Children arriving in Europe can be injured, suffering from traumatic experiences and the children can be incurred to physical, sexual and psychological abuse on their journey to Europe. (European Commission. Children in migration. EU actions to protect children in migration.)

The undocumented children often come to Europe through unsafe migration routes, which are dangerous. Lack of safe reception, the lack of reception capacity and prop-

er conditions as well as inspection and monitoring all effect on the safety of the children. The children are also in risk of detention and inappropriate conditions and even separation of their families. Lack of information and lack of legal advice and support affect the future of their situation. Children are especially vulnerable to sexual violence, sexual exploitation and trafficking. (European Commission. Children in migration. EU actions to protect children in migration.)

A study by Merry et.al (2017) indicated that the migrant situation affects parenthood in many ways. They concluded that migrants experience difficulties due to the loss of social support networks, the need to adjust to a new cultural context, experiences of discrimination, decline in social economic status and reduced access to health and social services. Families can be at risk of marginalization due to the pre-migration experiences of abuse and trauma, which also effect on the parenting. Children were considered an important source of strength and motivation for the undocumented migrant parents to overcome their difficult situations. Faith and family were described as key sources of support, as they gave hope and provided distractions from the things that causes stress in life. The unstable socio-economic situation of many irregular migrants affects the mental health and well-being of individuals and families. The poor socio-economic situation makes a person dependent of others or the society, which deteriorates the person's ability to take care of themselves. The feeling of not being able to provide for your family and be a part of the society affects the feeling of belonging. For parents, the fact that you are not able to provide your children and give them the best opportunities in life can be frustrating.

Both Merry et.al (2017) and Cardoso et.al (2018) concluded that often the children of immigrant families help their parents to navigate the social environment. The children can be more accustomed in the society due to schooling and interacting with other children. The children can be important resources for the parents who are less familiar with cultural norms and rules or the local language. The parents might depend on the children, especially youth, on language and in official circumstances, which makes the children more conscious of their situation than necessary. This can affect on the relationship and the power relationships in the family. (Merry et.al 2017; Cardoso et.al 2018; ETNO n.d, 13.)



## 5 GOOD RELATIONS

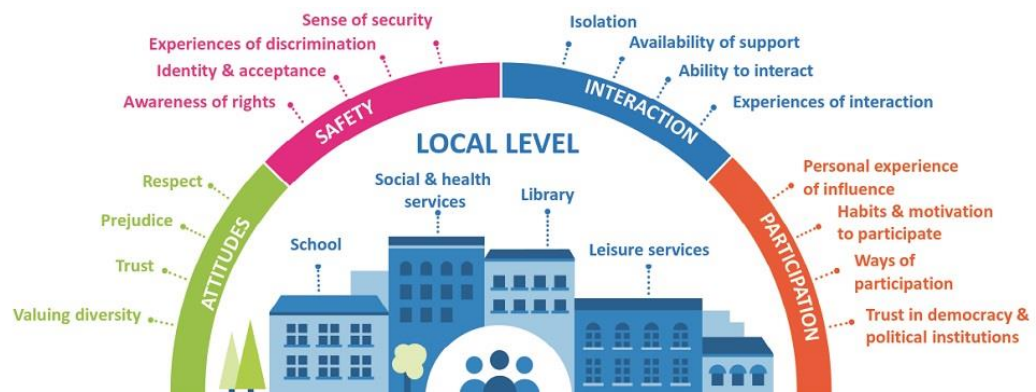
For the majority of Finnish citizens, the phenomenon of irregular migrations is unclear. The understanding of irregular migration is lacking and therefore the irregular migrants are seen as someone who just comes to exploit the welfare system, and this partly causes them to stay in the midst of the society. (Timonen 2017; Keränen 2019.) Through Good Relations policies the place of the irregular migrants could be re-determined, and attitudes changed. This is the reason Good Relations was chosen as a theoretical background for this research. As a part of Good Relations, sense of community is introduced. As the research is concentrating on families and well-being, the additional theoretical background includes opening the concept of well-being, especially in family context.

### 5.1 Elements of the Good Relations Policies

The purpose of the Non-discrimination Act (A1325/2014) is to promote equality and prevent discrimination as well as to enhance the protection provided by law to those who have been discriminated against. The Good Relations Policies aim to answer this purpose and are based on the idea that relations between population groups influence everyone in the society. Good Relations are especially important when examining integration, security and exclusion – how the good relations or the lack of them affect the phenomena. Relations between population groups make visible the structural and social issues, especially when considering minority groups. The realisation of equality between individual and groups is affected by discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech, which the Good Relations policies aim to reduce through influencing attitudes and increasing and improving interaction between groups in different areas of politics. (equality.fi. Goodrelations.fi. Relations between population groups influence everyone in the society.)

The key forms of Good Relations policies include influencing attitudes by providing information and education (equality.fi. Goodrelations.fi. Relations between population groups influence everyone in the society.) Lack of understanding and stereotypes affect the way the minorities are integrated in the communities and society.

Interaction with a diverse range of people is likely to lead to a greater understanding of minorities but in the case of irregular migration the interaction tends to stay at minimum. For the vast majority of people irregular migrants are not a reality. Picture1. demonstrates how relations between population groups influence everyone in the society, the concepts and relations are opened more in the following paragraphs.



Picture1. Relations between population groups influence everyone in the society. (Equality.fi. Goodrelations.fi. Relations between population groups influence everyone in the society.)

The Good Relations Framework was developed in the United Kingdom in order to understand the diversity and research how equality is met in the public. The Framework establishes four key elements on social relations that interact with each other. 1) Social relations are depending on and shaping attitudes. How people view others and how they believe they themselves are viewed creates attitudes, which are necessary for good relations to exist. Attitudes impact the other key elements of 2) safety, 3) interaction and 4) participation. (Wigfield & Turned 2010, 4-5.) In Finland, the Good Relations Framework relates to legislation and it has been used as a measuring tool when examining the overall integration of asylum seekers and migrants in general. Good Relations are based on the idea that citizens with different backgrounds can trust each other and there is not tensions between population groups. The policies relate to social politics as well as to education, housing, security, integration and equality. When good, the Good Relations increase well-being and the vitality of the nation.

The four key elements of the Good Relations Framework are presented in Picture2. and described in more depth in the following paragraphs.



Picture2. Indicators of good relations.

(Equality.fi. Goodrelations.fi. What affects good relations?)

Attitudes affect the way we feel and this in turn affects how we act. The decision of who is included and who is excluded and why is determined by people's attitudes. Feeling of being included and respected is central to the way in which people take part of the society, how they see their own place. Attitudes toward those who are excluded are important especially because the attitudes determine how society treats the excluded and how the policies aim to improve their status. Attitudes towards migrants often have their roots in feelings - the idea that migrants come to abuse the welfare system, to steal jobs from natives, and the idea that they are perpetrators of crime and violence. There is often a cultural argument of dividing people to 'us' and 'them', which is boosted by the habits and values the migrants represent. Attitudes are depended and shaped by Good Relations. (The World Bank 2013; Wigfield & Turner 2010, 35-36.)

Tolerance as a part of attitudes is one of the key elements of Good Relations. Without at least some level of tolerance and understanding, it is impossible to maintain Good Relations between population groups. (Männistö 2014, 6.) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines tolerance and emphasizes the responsibilities of Member States to develop and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all in the Declaration of principles on tolerance.

## Article 1 - Meaning of tolerance

1.1 Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty, it is also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace.

1.2 Tolerance is not concession, condescension or indulgence. Tolerance is, above all, an active attitude prompted by recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. In no circumstance can it be used to justify infringements of these fundamental values. Tolerance is to be exercised by individuals, groups and States.

1.3 Tolerance is the responsibility that upholds human rights, pluralism (including cultural pluralism), democracy and the rule of law. It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments.

1.4 Consistent with respect for human rights, the practice of tolerance does not mean toleration of social injustice or the abandonment or weakening of one's convictions. It means that one is free to adhere to one's own convictions and accepts that others adhere to theirs. It means accepting the fact that human beings, naturally diverse in their appearance, situation, speech, behaviour and values, have the right to live in peace and to be as they are. It also means that one's views are not to be imposed on others.  
(UNESCO 1995.)

Emotional and physical security are essential for Good Relations to be experienced by both individuals and the population. The attitudes affect and determine the emotional and physical security of individuals, which becomes visible when considering migrants. The security is threatened by attitudes especially in irregular migration when the attitudes guide people to think them as 'illegal' persons who threaten the overall security of the nation. Attitudes towards the minorities often affect the way how secure the minority individual feel and how they feel they are treated in public situations. The sense of belonging is a factor that affect positively on emotional and physical security, the mere fact that you are acknowledged can have an impact. (Wigfield & Turner 2013, 66-72.)

On individual level interaction is important for well-being. In terms of Good Relations interaction between a diverse range of people is particularly important. Interaction decreases negative attitudes and promotes safety. A lack of interaction can lead

to segregation in communities and societies. When people have little or no contact with those who are different from themselves, it can lead to a lack of understanding, increase stereotypes and result to negative Good Relations. (Wigfield & Turner 2013, 115-120.) Lack of interaction between the undocumented and the majority population can result to a division between ‘us’ and ‘them’ which affects the perpetuation of the phenomena in general. In Finland this theme can be seen all over between migrants and the majority population – especially between cities where most of the immigrant population reside in and interaction is common, and the rural areas, where communication is more limited.

Participation as a part of Good Relations can be determined by the feeling of being welcomed and accepted in their community. Participation gives an individual a sense of emotional and physical security and enables interaction within their community. Positive experiences of participation lead to experiences of empowerment and a sense that you are in charge of your life. (Wigfield & Turner 2013, 141-143.) In terms of irregular migration, participation could provide important benefit for integration and it could be seen through the experiences of the Unprotected community project, that participation increased the feeling of empowerment and made people more aware of their own rights (Mäki 2020, 8-9, 11).

## 5.2 Sense of community and well-being as a result of Good Relations

Belonging and having a sense of community has a vital role in integration and becoming a member of a new community. Migrant people often come from countries and communities that have a strong sense of community, and these people are used to having a community to rely on and that they are part of. Leaving that community, coming to Finland as a migrant and lately becoming undocumented affects the families on the community level and determines their place in the society. Sense of community has a new meaning in migration. As Maya-Jariego and Armitage (n.d.) describe, migration often means severing of community ties, losing of social networks and familiar bonds. Shared cultural understanding and similar histories in micro communities can help adaptation in the new society, which is why building communities as a migrant is beneficial. Itzhaky (2003) describes the physical transition from one country to another as a journey of leaving one social system and entering a

different one. This kind of transition results in many changes in the lives of individuals; processes of desocialization and resocialization happen. The transition results to protecting and preserving the old personal identities and simultaneously developing a new identity as a member of a new community. (Maya-Jariego & Armitage n.d., 749; Itzhaky 2003, 289.)

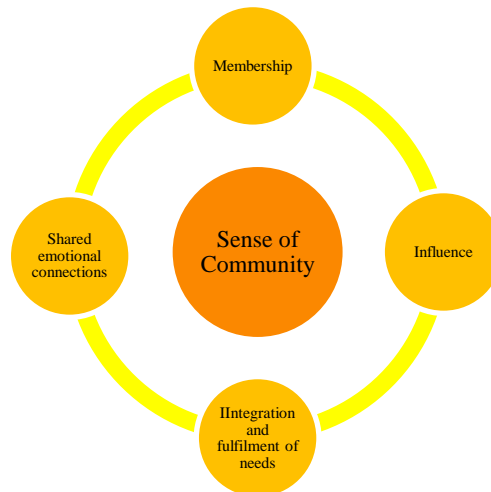


Figure2. The Elements of sense of community

Sense of community is often used to characterize the relationship between the individual and the social structure. Strong sense of community gives the community members a feeling that they have more influence on their immediate environment and they feel more secure in their community. The sense of community theory consists of four elements that affect each other (Figure2.): membership, influence, integration and shared emotional connections. 1) Membership constitutes the feeling of belonging to the community, the feeling of acceptance and knowing who is and is not part of the community. Membership provides emotional security and means of identification. 2) Influence stands for the feeling of being influential, having a say in the community; it also represents the interaction between an individual member and the community – how they influence each other. 3) Integration and fulfilment of needs indicates that being a member of the community satisfies a person's needs. 4) Shared emotional connections depicts the shared emotional history inside the community. (McMillan & Chavis 1986, 9.) According to Maya-Jariego and Armitage (n.d., 749) the importance of sense of community is based on two assumptions: firstly, positive sense of community is beneficial to individual well-being, to facilitating social relations and opposing anonymity and loneliness, and secondly community participation is beneficial for democratic society.

Often those who have an opportunity to be influential in their own community are coming from privileged situations, which indicates that undocumented people rarely have an opportunity to be influential in their own community. Coming from communities where decision making and influencing on individual level has been almost impossible, the undocumented may not have understanding on their own rights and responsibilities. Being unaccustomed to making their own decisions, the undocumented might find it difficult to make decisions and wait for the bureaucracy for decisions and answers. (Bartolomei et.al. 2018.) Community development and community projects help people to raise their level of awareness and increase their confidence and ability to identify their own problems through active involvement and participation. Community development can be defined as a process of improving the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities and enabling the communities to contribute fully to national progress. People can affect their own well-being and future through participating in community projects, which also increases the feeling of sense of community. (Edwards & Jones 2019, 138-141.)

Well-being means general health and happiness; combination of feeling good and being able to function well. It has several dimensions like emotional, physical and psychological well-being; it is affected by experiences of positive emotions, development of own potential, having control over own life, having a sense of purpose, and experiencing positive relationships. Different dimensions affect one another, and the overall experience of well-being can be determined by looking at all these factors. Income, education level and place in the society affect the well-being of both the community and individual. On community level, well-being is affected by environment and living arrangements, employment rate and working conditions, and income level. On individual level social relationships, creativity, happiness and social capital affect well-being. Well-being is often measured by the quality of life, which is affected for example by health, relationships and expectations of a good life. (THL 2020; Ruggeri et.al. 2020.)

Well-Being is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) promoted by UN. The Agenda 2030 reflects the connection between health, well-being and sustainable development. Widening economic and social inequalities, urbanization, climate change and global pandemics are threatening the well-being of the world population and driving people from the Global South to seek better life in the so-called welfare

states. Reducing inequalities and ending poverty are keys to improving the well-being of people around the world. Migration can impact the health and well-being of individuals positively by improving the socio-economic status and helping them escape from persecution and violence. However, migration also exposes persons to health risks, such as psychological stress, abuse, nutritional deficiencies and exposure to infectious diseases. Irregular migrants are more likely to suffer from a compromised health status. The third Sustainable Development Goals promotes good health and well-being. Including migrants into the society, regardless of their legal status, ensures that they have access to quality health care services and affordable essential medicines and vaccines. The SDG3 also promotes to increase health services and workforce in developing countries, which in long term affects the migration. (UNDP 2020; International Organization for Migration 2017.)

Campion and Jo (2007) introduce a dynamic model of well-being, that points out three main influences affecting the state of well-being: genetic factors, e.g. upbringing and environment; life circumstances, such as income, marital status and environment; and being involved in active pursuits and special interests. Satisfaction, personal development and social wellbeing are also considered as dimensions of well-being. Social well-being includes the sense of belonging to communities and feelings of contributing to the society. (Campion & Jo 2007.) CDC (2018) considers well-being to have different aspects such as physical, economic, social, emotional and psychological. In addition, also development and activity, life satisfaction, engaging activities and work, and domain specific satisfaction are considered aspects of well-being. There is no single definition of well-being, rather there is a general agreement that at minimum it includes the presence of positive emotions, the absence of negative emotions, satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning. The physical well-being is also critical aspect of well-being from the point of view of the public health. (CDC 2018.)

In families, well-being of individuals has an effect on each other. Especially the well-being of parents affects the children. Children pick up adults' emotions, feelings and attitudes, so the feelings of adults inevitably affect children. Ruggeri et.al. (2020) highlight that longitudinal data indicates that well-being in childhood predicts future wellbeing in adulthood.



Asylum seekers generally come from traumatic backgrounds, and even while the physical safety has been addressed when entering a safe environment, the person must confront a new situation of living as a stranger in a strange country. The person has nothing familiar in the new environment, except maybe the family they arrived with. In this situation, religion can provide comfort, strength and hope. Leonard (1997, 53-55) points out that for some people religious experiences and trust in God provide direction and comfort. Through religion one can have a sense of security and find easy answers to difficult questions. Leonard also states that there is a positive relationship between religiosity and subjective sense of well-being, which in irregular situation can help to maintain positivity and hope. Leonard (1997, 55) also introduces the idea of Pargament and Maton, who suggest that religious participation and belonging can have a positive impact on mental health by fulfilling the need for a sense of meaning, the need for community and belonging, and the need for proactive involvement in improving the world. In irregular migration situation religion can help to make sense of the situation and trust in God can provide needed assurance that the situation will change. (Schmid 2018; Leonard 1997.)

## 6 METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS DESCRIPTION

### 6.1 Research questions

The purpose of this research is to bring out the voices of the undocumented families and give them an opportunity to tell what kind of difficulties they have experienced and what kind of strengths they have. There is only a few earlier studies performed which participate the undocumented themselves and the aim of this theses is to increase research of this nature. The data collected could be used as a tool for the social work professionals working with the undocumented in order for them to provide the support needed and improve the services provided and to modify the services to answer the basic needs of the undocumented and how they see their situation.

The research questions this research aims to answer are:

1. What motivates and gives strength to them as parents in an irregular situation?
2. How do the parents in irregular situation experience their communities and see themselves as a part of the society?

### 6.2 Participants

As part of this research four interviews were conducted. The participants of the interviews were mothers and fathers living in Finland, who had experienced living without adequate documents. Two of the participants had a spouse who is registered in Finland, and one of them had recently got a residence permit herself. Also, one of the participants had previously had a residence permit in Finland, but it was not renewed after expiration. Two of the participants never had residence permits. All the participants had children born in Finland.

The participants were invited to the interviews by the staff members of the Unprotected Community project. They chose the participants from clients of the project and assessed who would be in a position to participate in this kind of research. As the

researcher did not have any contact with the participants before the interviews, there was a consent form (appendix 1.) for the participants to read and sign before starting the interviews. In the consent form was explained who the researcher is and why the interview is taking place. Through this the understanding of the interviewees was ensured and the participants had an opportunity to back out if they did not feel comfortable to participate. In the consent form a signature was requested, which was explained to be just for the researcher. This could have been left out of the consent form, as the undocumented might in general feel suspicious of signing the paper.

To enable understanding between the researcher and the participants an interpretive program tool called Tulka was used for two of the interviews. One of the participants was English speaking and one of the participants had her spouse with her to work as an interpreter. Before the interviews, the researcher had some background information on the participants from the staff members of the community project, through which the researcher was able to adapt the interview questions.

Later on in this report the participants will be referred as Father1, Father2, Father3, and Mother1.

### 6.3 Collecting data through semi-structural interview

Interviewing is one of the most common methods used in qualitative research. In qualitative research different types of interviews are commonly used; structured, semi-structured and unstructured open interviews are most common. The structure of the interview comes from the questions and the context of the interview. The type of interview chosen depends on the research purpose as different types of research need different types of data. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 43-46; Leavy 2017, 139.)

Individual interviews give the researcher an opportunity to gather data that is coming straight from the participant and the participants has a chance to explain themselves. During the interview the researcher has a chance to emphasize certain questions and ask clarifications if needed. Conducting an interview is a time-consuming method, but the data gathered in interviews is unique and can be examined on different levels. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 24-26.)

Glenwick and Jason (2016) describe semi-structured interviews as a qualitative research method where the purpose is to use open-ended questions that allow the researcher to follow up on emerging themes with additional questions. In qualitative research the aim is typically to learn about some phenomena in the participants lives and the data is for example collected by interviewing and observing. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) point out that qualitative research is often guided by theory, which is the reason why this research is based on the theory presented in the previous chapters.

In this research the interviews were conducted through semi-structural interview. Before the interviews a plan was constructed, and it contained open questions to ensure structure on the interview. In the actual interview setting, the interviews were maintained open and discussion based. The benefit of semi-structural interview is that even though having a thematic framework and structure, it is easy to keep the interview flexible. In the interviews it was possible to repeat the questions and ensure understanding and it was possible to ask more specific questions based on the answers from the participants. During the interviews data was also gathered for the Unprotected community project. These questions concerned the effectivity of their project in the participants lives.

Due to the covid-19 situation one of the participants did not want to conduct the interview face to face in the Al Amal-center, so the interview took place over telephone. Padgett (2008, 112) points out that in remote interviews there is a significant loss of information compared to in-person encounter. In a telephone interview there is a loss of socially coded cues such as the tone of voice, facial impressions and body posture. Padgett (2008) also points out that the participant is less likely to hold back when sitting across from the interviewer. From the point of view of this research, even the telephone interview was considered successful, and the interviewee and the interviewer were able to build an understanding with each other.

The interviews were audio-recorded, and notes were taken by the interviewer to be able to later transcribe and analyse the data. The recordings enabled later to check up on issues and stories the participants had told.

## 6.4 Thematic analysis

After the interviews were conducted and the necessary data gathered, the researcher first transcribed the recordings and the thematically analysed them. The analysis was guided by theory presented in the previous chapters and the themes that emerged from the interview structure are based both on theory and the themes the participants highlight in the interviews. With semi-structured interview the researcher was able to keep the interviews open so that the participants had a chance to highlight issues important for them.

While conducting the thematic analysis, the researcher first transcribed the interviews and got familiar with the text by reading it through several times. The data transcribed into eight pages of written text. Saldana, Leavy and Beretvas (2011, 95) describe this phase of analysis as taking cognitive ownership of the data. Patterns, categories and their interrelationships become more evident as the data gets more familiar. After familiarizing myself with the data the initial analysis was started.

First, the researcher highlighted phrases and sentences that were repeated in the data, giving codes of main points in the data. The codes emerge from the data, but as Saldana et.al. (2011, 97) point out, the data shows differently to the researchers, depending on their lenses and filters and the codes are plainly one person's interpretation of the data.

The codes highlighted were:

1. Future
2. Children's future
3. Hope
4. Family
5. God
6. Injustice
7. Bureaucracy
8. Law abiding
9. Difficulties

After figuring out the main points, the codes generated into themes. The themes should by Glenwick and Jason (2016, 34-35) capture something important in relation to the research question and they should be somehow remarkable for the participants. The themes should also tell the reader something helpful about the data in order to analyse it accordingly.

The themes captured from the data were:

Codes	Themes
Family Children's future Future	Future
God Hope Law abiding	Trust
Injustice Bureaucracy Difficulties	Grievances

Figure3. Initial themes

After getting the initial themes the researcher still reviewed them and compared the themes to the data. After reviewing the final themes of the research were defined and named.

The final themes were:

1. Future prospects
2. Trust of change
3. Grievances of the system

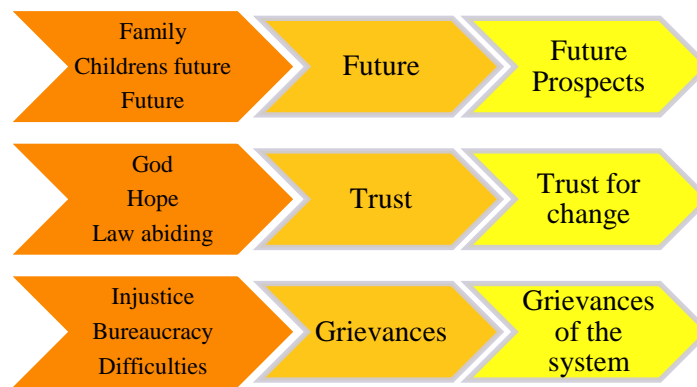


Figure4. Developing themes

### 6.5 The credibility and ethics of the research

As working with a vulnerable group of people, the ethics are highly important. Vulnerable groups are often left out of research, because of the difficulties that are faced with participating these groups. Aldridge (2015, 10-14) describes the vulnerable groups as people who are excluded from society or who are not connected to or part of a community and whom might be overlooked in research studies because of the nature of their marginalisation. The undocumented migrants can be included in the vulnerable groups and their voice is rarely heard. This is the reason why this research participated the undocumented migrants themselves rather than, for example, those who work with them. The researcher felt that it is important to hear the voice of the undocumented themselves and give them the opportunity to tell about their own situation.

As the participants of the interviews are part of the Unprotected community project and they have had a long relationship with the staff there, there was a risk that the client – employee relationship can affect the participation, so that the clients (the undocumented) feel obliged to participate in the research if the employees suggest it to them. As the participation should be totally voluntary, this might present a problem, which is why the consent form was presented, where the situation was explained, giving them a change to question the researcher and withdraw from the situation. All the participants volunteered to take part of the research.

Working with immigrant people, the researcher needed to consider the different backgrounds where we come from. As Leavy (2017, 25) describes we all bring our

own moral compass into our research experiences. We all have our own beliefs, attitudes, and ideas about the world, and hence the researcher and the participants will be coming from different backgrounds, the researcher had to consider how to be sure that they talk about the same things. Our values and histories bring dimensions in the interview and therefore the interviews were kept open, so that the understanding between the researcher and the interviewee could be ensured.

In this research also the fact that the researcher and some of the interviewees were not sharing a common language could affect the understanding. For ensuring the understanding between us the researcher and the interviewee an interpreter was used for the interviews where common language did not exist. In one of the interviews the spouse of the interviewee was used as the interpreter, which was the wish of the interviewee. This caused that the interview was not as informative as the others in terms of experiences of the irregular situation. The spouse as an interpreter ensured understanding between the researcher and the interviewee, but at the same time easily answered to the questions in own point of view. The researcher had to be extra vigilant in the interview situation and when analysing the data, so that the voice of the interviewee was heard.

It is important to ensure that the well-being, confidentiality, and dignity of the participants is protected in any study. As undocumented migrants can be considered as a vulnerable group, and in many terms they do not have a say in their life, this research wanted to ensure that the ones participating in the research are doing it on their own will and the wish is that the results of the research will benefit them somehow. But as this cannot be promised, the researcher can only promise to try to have their voices heard. The participants were told how the data will be processed and dismantled after the publication of the research. The audio-recordings, the transcribed interviews and the interview permits will be dismantled after the research has been published and till then the data is retained by the researcher.

As Glenwick and Jason (2016, 18) highlight, it is important for the researcher to understand the power they have. This needed to be considered in terms of how the participants will benefit from the research. How the researcher will enter in their lives, work with them, leave and finally present the findings. The participants need to understand the aim of the research and how the data collected from the will be used. It



is important that the participants understand the role and expectations of the researcher. This was ensured through the interview permit explained to the interviewees before the interviews.

Two of the participants highlighted that they were participating in the interview plainly to bring out the difficulties of being undocumented in Finland. Father2 told that he had participated in multiple interviews and was ready to tell his story so that the procedures would change. He also brought up the fact that he feels that Finnish people are masters on smiling and listening, but nothing gets done. He understood that in this research the researcher does not have any influence over the procedures and stated that this research is not helping him in any way, as he cannot have a residence permit through this research.

In this research assumptions are made on a group of people based on a small sample. This need to be recognized as thinking of the validity of the research. Despite the small size of the data, it gives an insight of the reality of families in irregular situation in Finland. The irregular migrants as a vulnerable part of the society are also relatively difficult to reach and participate, which is one of the reasons why this data is relatively small. The undocumented families are living in a situation, where they do not necessarily have strength to participate in a research like this. The participants of this research are talking about their own experiences and situations but are expressing themes that are covering the irregular situation widely. The assumptions made and the recommendations given are based on the research and the small data but can still be competent.

## 7 FINDINGS

Conducting a semi-structural interview gave an opportunity to guide the interviews in certain direction. It was beneficial not to have a clear structure in the interview in order to have an open discussion but there were certain themes and questions to guide the discussion. The themes arising from the interviews are also clearly visible in the questions (appendix 2.). The research aimed to figure out what kind of assets and strengths the families have in their situation and how they see their own situation – which things are good in their situation. The researcher wanted to build an understanding of the networks the participants have and how they see their place in the society.

### 7.1 Trust for change

Even as being in a difficult situation as an irregular migrant, all the participants had hope for a better future. They had hope that their situation will become regular and they will have a future in Finland. All the participants told that they do not want to move away from Finland, because of the prospects here. Finland is seen as a peaceful place where the society takes care of its citizens. The Al Amal center was a proof of this, as the participants could not have imagined that this kind of place could be operational and funded by the government in any other country. Experiences from other European countries strengthen the view that Finland is a good place to raise a family.

The system in Finland was seen difficult and time consuming, but still the participants had trust that it works accordingly. Finland is seen as a secure and peaceful environment and an especially good place to live with children. One of the fathers indicated that they could relocate to another country and get documents there by proving that their children had been born in Finland, but the parents wanted their children to live and grow up in Finland. Below is an example of one of the interviewees' insight on the security of Finland.

When we came to Finland, we see that it is better organized than in Greece where we are coming from. At least here the society is 80 per-

cent law abiding, it is important to have peace in life and in Finland there is peace. -- If everything works out this is the kind of place, I want to live in.

- Father1

Two of the fathers highlighted religion and trust to God as a strength. Clearly the trust to God kept the parents going and helped them to make sense of the situation. Father3 emphasized that God will take care of the family and decide their future, as quote below reflects. He had no fear of the future because of the trust to God.

I believe in God and I believe he will take care of me.

- Father3

## 7.2 Future prospects

All the participants highlighted their situation through children. Children were the reason the parents kept working for their papers, as the situation in the country of origin would not be beneficial for the children and their future. All the choices the parents were making were because of the future of their children, starting from the original move from the country of origin. The parents talked about the importance of education and how they are happy seeing their children grow up in a safe environment. Differences in raising a child in the country of origin and in Finland were brought up, and one of the fathers mentioned for example the fact that in their country of origin he would not let the children move out from the parent's house but in Finland he has no fear. Two of the fathers mentioned how the children are more adapt in the Finnish society and grow up as Finnish rather than any other nationality, even though they are not Finnish in the eye of the law.

What gives us motivation? Can I say love? When you see your kids, they give you strength to work as much as I can to give them life and hope and future.

- Father1

What makes me keep trying? Children, so that they have a future.

- Father2

One of the fathers emphasizes how difficult it is to live in irregular situation, that it is both mentally and physically challenging. He told that the children know that they are helped by other people, but the parents try to keep their minds positive so that the children do not need to experience the stress they are having.

One of the fathers emphasized the importance of looking at the family situations through the whole family, not just the parents. He felt that currently the system does not consider the children and their rights, but just the parents' situation. He was questioning, how the irregular situation affects the children and how they should be considered as individuals, he had previously had a residence permit, but it was not renewed when it expired because the lack of Finnish language skills. The father was indicating that the residence permit situations should consider the whole family, not only the situation of the individuals. He emphasized that the authorities should assess the situation through the children and consider their future and place in the process. He felt that it is not adequate to reject the residence permit only based on his language skills, but to also look at the situation more widely.

The mother interviewed had recently acquired a residence permit herself and was telling about how it changed her situation. The situation of being undocumented when pregnant and after the baby was born had been stressful and affected her mental wellbeing. After the decision of the residence permit, she had been able to relax and enjoy motherhood. She emphasized the importance of support in her situation: without the active support from the Unprotected community project and especially one staff member, she would not have had the strength to fight for her rights when pregnant.

### 7.3 Grievances of the system

All the interviewees highlighted the difficulties of being in an irregular migration situation in Finland. The difficulties of the processes and the bureaucracy were considered to make the lives of irregular migrants considerably difficult. One of the participants was especially vigilant of the legal aspects of how he had been treated in Finland. The fact that their children were born in Finland but were not entitled to

Finnish documents was making him very angry. All the fathers were saying that they would not choose differently knowing their situation now. They would still come to Finland and try, like they are doing now.

Finnish people see a black person as someone who does not read or write. – The situations should be looked as a whole, not to decline residence permit based on one small detail.

- Father2

Father1 highlighted that he never wanted to be undocumented, he wanted to work and support the family. All the participants had a clear idea of their future: studying, learning the language and working. He described his situation in the beginning when the family initially came to Finland; when it became clear that they will not receive asylum, the father was guided to look for a job and apply for residence permit based on that. He told me that he was able to attain a job and when working, he applied for a residence permit. The decision was that the work he had, the period of the contract, the working hours or something, was not enough and the residence permit was declined. He described feeling lost and how he could not understand what the authorities wanted him to do – as he was doing exactly what was suggested to him.

I'm like in prison. I can't study, I can't get a job. Everywhere they require a residence permit. The employer tells you to go to Migri and from Migri they say you need to find a job. Bureaucracy is on the way, making life as an undocumented complicated.

- Father3

The participants mentioned that the problem is that they have no position in the society, but they have a hope of becoming members of the society and being able to contribute for the society. They were also annoyed that the reality was so different from their expectations and wondered how the bureaucracy benefitted anyone. The participants emphasized how the system in Finland does not benefit immigrants, as it is so complicated that even the locals do not know how to operate. The participants brought up how the Al Amal- center and the staff members as well as some social workers were the ones that made it possible for them to live in Finland by helping them to understand the system and fill papers. The staff members of the Al Amal-

center had provided help in the practicalities and helped them to understand their rights and responsibilities.

The fact that you cannot do much when you do not have documents was highlighted. The fathers hoped that the system would change so that they would be able to work and provide for their families and change their situation through that channel. The lack of documents and the complicated system seems to decrease motivation and increases disempowerment and dependence. Frustration of just sitting home unable to do anything was highlighted by the participants.

The complexity of the asylum process makes it difficult for the undocumented to follow their own asylum processes. They know that they have a process going, but whether it is going in the Supreme Court or in the Administrative Court level is not known and the undocumented must trust other people on the matters of their lives.

In irregular situation one trouble seems to be the lack of support systems. One of the aims of this research was to determine what kind of networks and support systems the undocumented have in their lives. In the interviews the participant were asked to describe their support systems, whether they have friends or relatives living in Finland. All the fathers told that the only support system they have is their own family. Father1 highlighted the Unprotected community project as a support network and emphasized frequently how their family would not have managed without the staff members and their help.

“It’s just me and my wife.”

-Father3

The mother on the other hand emphasized the importance of friends in her situation. Her situation differed from the fathers, as she came to the country as a spouse to a native. Even though she had no legal residency, she had a connection to the society through her husband. She also emphasized the importance of the Unprotected community project and especially the employee she considered to be her own.

## 8 DISCUSSION

The Good Relations policies aim to develop consensus between different population groups. In this chapter the theory and the findings of the research are linked together through three different themes; how irregular migration affects families; how exclusion and politics affect irregular migration; and how structural racism and attitudes affect irregular migration.

The themes arising from the interviews are linked with the theory of Good Relations, in terms of how the elements of attitudes, safety, participation and interaction affect irregular migration based on the interviews. How the lack of opportunities on participation affects families and individuals when growing up. How exclusion and politics affect the overall sense of security, especially in terms of the difficulties of the system the interviewees highlighted. How structural racism and attitudes affect the phenomena of migration and what is the future of irregular migration.

### 8.1 Families outside the system

Könönen (2014) studied how an individual can build their life and get income as a migrant in Finland. He pointed out that the legal status compared to Finnish citizens is visible especially in the basic needs: income, family life and continuance of life. A study by Merry et.al (2017) indicated that the migrant situation affects parenthood in many ways. They concluded that migrants experience difficulties due to the loss of social support networks, adjustments to a new cultural context, experiences of discrimination, declines in social economic status and reduced access to health and social services. Families can be at risk of marginalization due to the pre-migration experiences of abuse and trauma, which also affect the parenting as well. Children were considered an important source of strengths and motivation for the undocumented migrant parents to overcome their difficult situations. Faith and family were described as key sources of support, as they gave hope and provided distractions from the different topics that cause stress in life. (Merry et.al. 2017.)

For the children growing up in an irregular situation is in many ways excluding; how they build their identity and how the society see them. Identity forms the basis of individuals; it reflects the feeling of who you are and how you relate to the world and societies surrounding you. Identity forms in relationship with the surrounding community and how the person is seen and what is valued in the community. Forming a solid identity supports the person when growing up and determining their place in the society. Part of identity is how the person can build a relationship of trust with the society they belong in. (ETNO n.d, 6, 10, 13-14.)

For the parents, the children were the main reason for staying in Finland and adapting to the irregular situation. The children's future was the motivator to stay and fight with the system. The parents that were interviewed highlighted how being undocumented affects the children and father2 for example questioned why their children are not considered Finnish when they are born and growing up in Finland. He questioned why they do not have a right to be Finnish and belong to the society. The children grow up thinking that they do not belong, they do not have the same rights as other children. They might question why they are not able to participate in hobbies and why they cannot travel like their friends. The children need to adapt their lives in a way that they cannot understand. Ruggeri et.al. (n.d) pointed out that childhood well-being predicts wellbeing in adulthood - if poverty and exclusion are realities since childhood, do they inevitably affect the adulthood also?

Are my children Finnish or African? What are they? What are their rights? Where are their human rights?

- Father2

Father1 mentioned that the children know how their parents cannot work and that they receive help from others. He also emphasized how the parents try to keep their mind positive, at least when with the children, so that the stress does not affect the children. Children are masters in reading and interpreting their parent's emotions and inevitably the stress the parents are experiencing affect the children as well. Mental stress affects the parenting, as the parent might not have enough resources to answer to the children's needs. Every child should have the right to healthy parents, whom have the strength to support the children growing up. Parents in irregular situation may lack the means and strength to support their children in the best possible way. It



is important to support the families in vulnerable situation with multiprofessional collaboration between different actors, e.g. school, day care, child health center and social work. (ETNO n.d, 13.)

My children know that daddy is not working and cannot work. They know that people help us.

- Father1

## 8.2 Exclusion and politics affecting irregular migration

As discussed earlier, the mere existence of undocumented migrants is systematically used by xenophobic and racist parties and actors to categorise migrants as a problem for host societies or in many cases as ‘enemies among us’. Kalm-Akubardia (2020) states in her article that the undocumented migrants can work as a political tool on both national and international level. The fact that the undocumented are not entitled to the same rights as citizens and the fact that the undocumented are stigmatized as ‘illegal’ is an example on how irregular migration is used as a political tool. At the same time one major reason for irregular migration is politics. In public conversation and media, the undocumented are defined as a threat, which affects the way they are treated. This is one of the reasons why it is important to avoid using the term ‘illegal’ when talking about irregular migration. If the public starts to see the undocumented more as an asset than a threat, they will start getting more help and protection, through which they will integrate into the society.

The World Bank defines social inclusion as *“the process of improving the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights”*. Socially excluded groups of people are those confronting barriers that prevent them from fully participating in political, economic and social life. (The World Bank 2020.) Irregular migrants are clearly this kind of a group. They are not only excluded through legal systems, but also affected by discriminatory attitudes, beliefs and perceptions. Exclusion takes away an individuals’ dignity, security and the opportunity to seek for a better life.

During the year 2020 the structural racism and minority rights have been in public discussion for example through the Black Lives Matter movement. Structural racism as a part of the society becomes visible in discussion on migration, which affects the migrants themselves. Generally, it is acknowledged that everyone has the right to exist and demand better quality of life for themselves and their family, but at the same time the public in the so-called welfare states do not want to share their wealth with the unprivileged. The BLM, Pride and Me too movements have brought minority rights in the public discussion and raised questions on whether the human rights belong to everyone or not. This same discussion can be related to migration and especially irregular migration.

Subjective well-being can be measured in the way in which society treats its members and how people feel they can access opportunities and be influential. The fairness of institutions can be measured through four main criteria: 1) the ability of individuals to express their opinions, which according to this research is not met in the lives of the undocumented, as the processes do not listen to opinions but merely look at facts. 2) The consistency of the authority in its application of processes and transparency of its decision. The procedures in Finland are mainly consistent and transparent, but this reality is not coming to the knowledge of the undocumented themselves due to the complicity of the system. 3) Respectful treatment of individuals. The participants of this research emphasized the feelings that they have been made to jump from one authority to another and for example father2 brought up the fact that Finnish people do not consider migrants on the same level as the general population. 4) The perceived trustworthiness of the authorities. The authorities were considered trustworthy, but not humane. (The World Bank 2013.)

One of the interviewees talked a lot about the fact how he had been telling his story multiple times to different people in order to make the issues visible. He felt that Finnish people are masters in smiling and listening, but nothing gets done and the reality is hidden in the background. In general, he described that Finnish people admit that there are big issues in irregular migration, but the authorities are not willing to do anything to change the situation. The father participating in my research described that they do not have any particular communities where they feel that their family belongs to. In an irregular situation it can be difficult to build communities for

the family, as the parents might feel that they cannot trust people. The fear of authorities and the risk of deportation keeps the undocumented families hidden in the shadows which in turn increase exclusion. Through these interpretations it can be determined that the undocumented migrants themselves feel excluded from the society.

The Future of Immigration 2020 strategy Vision states that equality belongs to all; it emphasizes how immigration increases the well-being of the citizens and strengthens competitiveness of Finland. The vision states that immigration should be systematic and controlled, so that the benefits will become visible. The key point should be how migrants are able to utilize their expertise and contribute on the building of the nation. The strategy recognizes that Finland has a need for employment and that migrants can be an answer for this need. The irregular migrants are often willing to take jobs which the general population consider unpopular – the so-called 3D jobs (dirty, difficult and dangerous) - and that makes them a valuable asset for the national economy. (The Ministry of the Interior Finland 2013.) Könönen (2014) points out that the irregular migrants have an important role in the structure of the society, but legally they do not exist. He indicates that the reality of migrant work force would become visible in an imaginary situation where all migrants working in the service industry would go on a strike at the same time. The question is that if this is recognized and stated, why the migrants already residing and integrated in Finland are not utilized as a work force.

The Ministry of the Interior of Finland has launched an update of an action plan for preventing illegal entry and residence for 2021-2024. The updated action plan concentrates also on those residing in the country without adequate documentation, the phenomena of abuse associated with them and the status of human trafficking victims. The aim of the action plan is to promote concrete measures to prevent people from staying in the country without legal right, such as supported return and reintegration and proactive measures in countries of origin. Working with victims of human trafficking and preventing exploitation of foreign workers are part of the action plan. (Finnish Government 2020.)

Minister of the Interior Maria Ohisalo states *“The action plan will seek ways to prevent the emergence of a shadow society. We need to pay particular attention to vul-*

*nerable people, such as victims of human trafficking. People who reside in the country without a residence permit are particularly at risk of becoming excluded and being exploited by criminals or crime groups. If a young person has no hope for the future, he or she can also become more easily excluded from society and turn to criminal activity”.* She also highlighted exclusion as one of the major security threats in Finland. (de Fresnes 2019; Finnish Government 2020.)

National Police Board of Finland brings out the risks of organized crime and gang activity in the migrant population (Police of Finland 2017). In Sweden, the gang affiliated violence has been increasing in the recent years (YLE 2018) and authorities are afraid that this kind of action comes to Finland also (YLE 2018b). In Sweden, the undocumented had a right to go to school only in year 2013 (Jönsson 2014), which indicates that the undocumented youth today are not integrated properly partly because of the lack of education. It also came clear from this research that in Sweden the attitudes towards undocumented are mainly negative, which also affects the integration and seeking of services.

The Dublin regulation has been implemented in order to make sure that asylum seekers are treated fairly when entering Europe. It works under the assumption that the asylum laws and practices are based on the same common standards in all EU states, but the reality is that asylum legislation and practices vary widely in different countries. This causes asylum seekers to receive different treatment across Europe. The interest towards Finland in asylum seekers comes from overall security and high social security. Finland is seen as a responsible country which complies with the international legislation. The asylum seekers generally want to do the application in a country where it is probable to get a positive result. (UNHCR n.d; Police of Finland 2017.)

The Helsinki Deaconess Foundation has promoted for the return of the humanitarian residence permit category (Deaconess Foundation 2019). In year 2016 when the humanitarian residence permit category was evoked, many migrants previously having a residence permit became undocumented. They are people who have lived in Finland for multiple years, they are having a residence in a municipality which gives them a chance for example a rental apartment from the municipality and health ser-

vices but they are still not legally residents of Finland. They might be working and studying, building lives in Finland and part of the society, but still excluded.

### 8.3 Structural racism and attitudes affecting irregular migration

One of the difficulties in terms of the phenomena of irregular migration is racism. It can be hidden in the structures and in the midst of the phenomena, but it is there, and it affects. Racism is much more than hate speech, discrimination and violence, it is a system which is maintained in the social and power structures and it is a part of the social, economic and political systems. In European society, whiteness is a norm, and it also refers to the social hierarchies and power structures, not just mere skin colour. Structural racism hidden in the laws, services, institutions and functioning of the society affects the minorities and the vulnerable population. The structural racism might be unconscious, and it develops from stereotypes and social norms. For irregular migrants, the structural racism can become visible for example in labour market – when a person is chosen to do a job based on the resume and experience, but later the employer withdraws the contract based on the irregular situation. In this kind of situation, the person would have means to get out of the irregular situation based on employment but is denied the chance due to the irregular situation. Generally, within integration the structural racism becomes visible in terms of education and the fact that migrants are guided towards certain fields with manual labour regardless of the interests and background experiences of the individual. (Gee & Ford 2011; Non-discrimination ombudsman. Syrjintä ja yhdenvertaisuus. Rasismi.)

The integration policies and the role of migrants in general is vague in Finnish context. Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (A1386/2010), for example, supports and promotes integration and aims to make it easier for immigrants to have an active role in the Finnish society. However, the legislation only applies to persons who are having a valid residence permit or other adequate documentation in Finland, and therefore leaves out the ones in irregular situation. The act aims to promote interactions between population groups, enhancing ethnic relationships and dialogue between different culture, which would be beneficial also to the migrants in irregular situation. It is acknowledged that migrants are an important part of the society and a needed asset for the nation to develop. Still, they are mainly considered to be ‘them’ and treated as outsiders, even if born in the country and legally in every term Finnish.

Does the Finnish society have a desire to make the migrants an equal part of the society or are they just as beneficial as outsiders? The general attitudes and the way immigration is addressed in public and political discussion tend to be generally negative.

UNDP report (2019) indicates that the majority of irregular migrants from Africa to Europe would travel despite knowing the risks and difficulties they would face. The realities in the country of origin are not better than life as an irregular migrant in Europe. The lack of opportunities in many African countries is the reason for emigration and Europe is seen as a better option, even with an 'illegal' status. The migrants felt that they have not been treated fairly by their governments and the political systems in their countries of origin and they feel that the countries of origin do not provide an opportunity through which to influence. Perception, lack of opportunities and the low level of income were amongst the reasons of emigrating. (UNDP 2019.) The changes in legislation and policies made by the governments in Europe are made in terms of trying to decrease the number of irregular migrants and this raises a question of effectiveness. As the UNDP report and this study indicate, the irregular migrants would do their journey again even though knowing the situation they will end up in. As said, for many migrants the situation of irregularity in Europe is still considered better than the regular situation in the country of origin. Irregular migration status does not benefit the individual, nor does it benefit the state he or she lives in. The reality of the reasons behind the migration still make the person stay in the host country, so would it not be beneficial to integrate them and take them as part of the society rather than keep them in the shadows?

The irregular migration situation tends to be the product of immigration laws. In Finland, the so-called humanitarian residence permit category gave individuals an opportunity to become a member of the society. Those persons worked and studied, build a live in Finland and became members of the society. After the legislation change, they suddenly became undocumented and many were unable to attain residence permit with other reasons. Still the question is that how did this legislation change benefit the society? It is clear that it was done in order to decrease the attractiveness of Finland as a migration destination, but why not integrate the ones already residing in Finland? And as the UNDP report for example indicates, the attractive-

ness of the European countries have a little if any difference in the migration sphere, as the reality of life is anyway better in Europe than in Africa for example.

The Finnish Government Programme for the Government of Sanna Marin (2019) is noting also the undocumented, it aims to decrease the number of the undocumented with wide collaboration with different agencies (Finnish Government 2019). The simple answer of deporting the undocumented is not the answer Finnish society should choose. The number of undocumented in Finland could relatively easily be reduced by changes in policies and making the processes more individual. A change in attitudes and collaboration are keys of tackling the problem.

How the undocumented are referred in public discussion affects the attitudes. Over the past ten years the language on how the undocumented are referred in media and public discussion has notably changed (e.g. YLE 2013 vs. YLE 2020). Ten years ago, it was quite common to refer to the undocumented as 'illegal' which also determined their place in the society. The fact that a picture is drawn of a person who is illegal and comes to the country to exploit the benefits, inevitably affects the way the person or the phenomena is seen. Media has an important role in public discussion and how they perceive the situation. Over the recent years the undocumented have been promoted in the media in a more humanitarian manner, from the perspective of their need for help and difficulties in every day live (e.g. Keränen 2019; Kosonen 2019; Puhto 2019).

## 9 CONCLUSIONS

### 9.1 Promoting Good Relations and Equality

The Good Relations policies aim to influence attitudes and improve interaction between different groups in the society. The Good Relations policies are targeted on multiple levels of the society in order to transform into norms of action. Lack of understanding is one of the major reasons for exclusion when considering minority groups. The native Finnish might find it threatening and suspicious that the migrants move in groups and gather together; whilst the migrants feel safer when moving together, because they feel that the native Finnish are suspicious and prejudiced toward them. Providing information and education for both the natives and the migrants is an efficient way of tackling these kinds of misinterpretations. Interaction with a diverse range of people is likely to lead to greater understanding of the undocumented but for the majority of native Finnish even the reality that there is irregular migrants is not known.

One of the key elements in the good relations policy is attitudes – they impact everything, including the other key elements of safety, interaction and participation. The interviews conducted for this thesis highlighted the attitudes the undocumented have encountered. The interviews tell how the undocumented see that they are not treated as individuals and how they are not treated as equal members of the society. One of the fathers described that Finnish people consider ‘black people’ as illiterate and how that affects on how they are treated. For the undocumented the feeling of physical safety was an important factor in deciding to stay in Finland even on irregular status. However, the emotional safety in irregular situation can be lacking. The fathers described their situations as insecure, because of the lack of documentation – in any time they could face the deportation. This can be boosted by the fact that in the public discussion the undocumented are referred as ‘illegal’, which reminds the person of the risk of detention. There can also be a lack of interaction and participation in an undocumented situation. The undocumented do not have any influence in their community and even lacking a chance to influence their own lives. It could be seen from the midterm evaluation of the Unprotected Community project (Mäki 2020) that the



persons encountered feelings of belonging and through the project they have been empowered to become more active participants in their own lives.

It came clear from the previous research, from the staff members of the Unprotected community project and from the undocumented themselves who were interviewed, that there is a huge importance on guidance and counselling. The participants of the interviews emphasized the difficulties of the Finnish system and how it is difficult to navigate in it and how important of an asset the staff members of the project and the social workers have been. The difficulties are boosted by the attitudes and prejudice of the social workers and other authorities the undocumented meet, resulting in the fact that the information is not necessarily given in an adequate manner and the authorities do not consider the situations as whole.

As Mikkola (2019) and Merry et.al. (2017) studies indicate, one of the main ways of tackling irregular migration is through getting the undocumented to understand their own rights and opportunities. The solution to reducing number of migrants in irregular situation is to give them more realistic chances to change their situation. The irregular migration situation requires clear legislation, clear political policy definitions and guidelines for authorities as well as simply better understanding of the irregular situation and their rights. The only solution to irregular migration is not returning the people into their country of origin. More likely that will cause different kind of migration and even increase the amount of the undocumented.

Education allows an individual to exercise all their rights and helps the individual to understand when they are not met. For children in irregular migration situation education is important in terms of understanding the society and learning about your own rights. School is much more than just a place to learn how to read and write, in school the children have social interaction, and they learn social skills with the other students and teachers. (Korniloff and Laine 2014.) Important aspect of education is the attitudes of the staff members and how they see the irregular migrants. The teachers and staff members should have adequate anti-racist education for them to understand the situations. Anti-racist education works actively against racism and discrimination and anti-racist procedures includes acknowledging that racist beliefs and structures are pervasive in all aspects of our lives and they must be actively undermined, especially when working with children.

## 9.2 View of the process

The reality of the families in irregular migrant situation in Finland become visible through the research: the desperation of the fathers in irregular situation compared to the simple joy of the mother who had acquired her residence permit. How the mother had a different kind of view of the future now, when she had her documents compared to what she talked about her time as undocumented. It was eye opening how the fathers had hope and trust that their situation would become better. The anger and frustration were clearly present, but less than expected by the researcher.

The reality of the irregular situation is that the families can face a decision of deportation any time. They could have been in the process for years and built a life in Finland, they might have hope for a better future and trust for the system. The families include children born in Finland, who have not visited the country of their parent's origin. The parents might not have been in their country of origin for decades and still they are facing the risk of deportation. The hope that was present in all of the interviews could shatter any day.

On both Finnish and international level, the perception in some ways seems to be that becoming undocumented is a choice. For example the reality of facing deportation; even if it is clearly better for the children to grow up in Finland, the Finnish immigration services withdraw from their responsibilities by stating that it is a choice to have children when aware of your own irregular situation. In a fictive situation where two migrants from different countries but both in irregular situation meet in Finland, fall in love and decide to have a family – if deported, the family have no means of staying together when the parents would be deported to different countries. In this kind of situation, do the immigration services again state that it was their choice to build a life together? These questions of choice are somewhat unjust, as it is one of the fundamental human rights to build a life and have a family.

In terms of irregular migration, research is important. It is crucial to understand the circumstances behind the phenomena; climate change, for example, will increase global migration and possibly also irregular migration. Sustainable choices and international collaboration are important in order to build a better, equal world for everyone on the planet. In Finnish context irregular migration is relatively new phenomena

and recently research related to it has increased, as this study indicates. There is still a need to widen the research and focus on the families and especially the children growing up in an irregular situation – the effects of growing up outside the system can be disadvantageous for the society. It should be assessed more whether it is more beneficial to the society to legitimise the irregular migrants living in the country rather than keeping them in the shadows of the society. Research indicates that in some countries legitimisation processes has been done in order to decrease irregular migration (EUR-Lex 2004). The irregular migrants could be granted temporal residence through the legitimisation process, for example, when they have already resided in the country for several years and integrated in the society. Through a temporal residence they could find a way out of the irregular situation, for example, through employment. The legitimisation of the irregular migrants would be therefore beneficial also for the employment sector and would decrease the illegal employment.

For the researcher, this thesis project has been challenging, but also eye opening and the overall experience has been positive. The process has given insight and understanding on the situation of the irregular migrants and an opportunity to grow as a researcher and build professional competence and experience. The process has also given understanding on the importance of human rights-based approach, when working with a vulnerable group of people. It is important to understand the complexity and the history of the situation. In terms of irregular migration, the history has a significant role, as the situation in the country of origin as well as the journey could have been traumatizing and stressful.

The complexity of the situation of the irregular migrants affected this research also. The different dimensions of the phenomena and the vulnerability of the participants were issues that needed to be considered when conducting the interviews and analysing the data. The importance of the relations between population groups and the understanding of the irregular situation are justifications on choosing the Good Relations policies as a theoretical framework. However, in this research, the different dimensions of Good Relations compared to the complexity of the phenomena of irregular migration resulted to wide discussion on the rights of the irregular migrants, which affected on identifying the connections between the data and the theory. Still in this kind of research it was important to highlight the themes emerging both from

the interviews and from the research in the discussion part of the thesis in order to develop discussion on the phenomena and compare these themes to the current news.

The people in irregular situation are in a vulnerable position when seeking for help. The actors working with the people in irregular situation have to decide whether to just help a person in need or to follow the legislation and guidelines provided. The vague guidelines considering the irregular migrants oblige the actors working with the irregular migrants to make their own decisions. The people in irregular situation need help in order to demand rights for themselves and in this the experts in social services field are in a key position. Jauhiainen, Gadd and Jokela (2018, 8) emphasize that there is a need to build working interaction and trust between the people in irregular situation and the Finnish citizens. It is important that the human rights of the irregular migrants are the focus when working with them and when making legislation changes or policies considering them. It is crucial to support the opportunities of the irregular migrants in order for them to find their place in the society.

## REFERENCES

- A1325/2014 Non-discrimination Act. Unofficial translation. The Ministry of Employment and the economy, Finland. Retrieved 12.10.2020 from [https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2004/en20040021\\_20090084.pdf](https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2004/en20040021_20090084.pdf)
- A1386/2010 Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration. Unofficial translation. Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Finland. Retrieved 16.11.2020 from <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2010/en20101386.pdf>
- A731/1999 The Constitution of Finland. Ministry of Justice, Finland. Retrieved 12.10.2020 from <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1999/en19990731.pdf>
- Al Omair, N. & Heikinheimo, M. 2013. Paperittomien oikeus terveyteen. Retrieved 9.10.2020 from [http://www.paperittomat.fi/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/paperittomien-oikeus-terveyteen\\_verkkoon.pdf](http://www.paperittomat.fi/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/paperittomien-oikeus-terveyteen_verkkoon.pdf)
- Aldridge, J. 2015. Participatory Research: Working with Vulnerable Groups in Research and Practice. Bristol: Policy Press. Retrieved from: <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/anna diak.fi:2048/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=7dbd92f4-b639-4d86-bee5-456d9c932bc8%40sdc-v-sessmgr01&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZW hvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=nlebk&AN=964850>
- An-Na'im, A. 1995. Human rights in cross-cultural perspectives. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc. Retrieved 27.4.2020 from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/diak/detail.action?docID=3441500>
- Bartolomei, L.; Ward, K. & Garret, M. 2018. Disruptive rights-based community development in protracted urban refugee contexts: The politics of legal recognition. In the Routledge Handbook of Community Development Research, edited by Lynda Shevellar, and Peter Westoby. Taylor & Francis Group. Retrieved from <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/diak/detail.action?docID=5359195>.
- Boswell, C. & Geddes, A. 2011. Migration and mobility in the European Union. Palgrave MacMillan: United Kingdom.
- Bustamante, L.; Cerqueira, R.; Leclerc, E. & Brietzke, E. 2017. Stress, trauma, and posttraumatic stress disorder in migrants: a comprehensive review. Brazilian

- Journal of Psychiatry. Retrieved 21.10.2020 from <https://doi.org/10.1590/1516-4446-2017-2290>
- Campion, J. & Nurse, J. 2007. A dynamic model of well-being. Retrieved 10.10.2020 from <https://journals-sagepub-com.anna.diak.fi/doi/pdf/10.1080/10398560701701106>
- CDC 2018. Health related quality of life. Well-being concepts. Retrieved 12.10.2020 from <https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm#three>
- Crawley H. 2018. Why understanding the relationship between migration and inequality may be the key to Africa's development. Retrieved 17.11.2020 from <https://oecd-development-matters.org/2018/10/30/why-understanding-the-relationship-between-migration-and-inequality-may-be-the-key-to-africas-develop-ment/#:~:text=Migration%20is%20a%20highly%20visible,labour%20market%20opportunities%2C%20or%20lifestyles.&text=Inequalities%20can%20also%20result%20from,for%20migrants%20and%20their%20families.>
- De Fresnes, T. 2019. Analyysi: Turvallisuus sai uuden painotuksen – Vihreä sisäministeri käänsi puheet turvapaikanhakijoista ja rosvoista syrjäytyneiden auttamiseen. YLE. Retrieved 18.10.2020 from <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-10834005>
- Deaconess Foundation n.d. Code of Conduct.
- Deaconess Foundation. About us. Retrieved 25.7.2020 from <https://www.hdl.fi/en/about-us/>
- Deaconess Foundation. Undocumented people. The Unprotected. Retrieved 25.7.2020 from <https://www.hdl.fi/en/support-and-action/immigrants/undocumented-people/>
- Drischenko, I. & Kyyhkynen V.2020. Kaikkien naisten talo: Hankkeen merkitys paperittomille naisille osallisuuden näkökulmasta. Bachelor thesis: Turku University of Applied Sciences. <https://www.theseus.fi/handle/10024/340215>
- Elo, M. 2017. Päämäärien valtakunnan kansalaiset: Paperittomuuden ammattieettinen haaste sosiaalialan työntekijöille. Bachelor thesis: Diaconia University of Applied Sciences. <https://www.theseus.fi/handle/10024/126105>
- Equality.fi. Goodrelations.fi. Relations between population groups influence everyone in the society. Retrieved 21.10.2020 from <https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi/en/goodrelations.fi>
- Equality.fi. Goodrelations.fi. What affects good relations? Retrieved 21.10.2020 from <https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi/en/what-affects-good-relations->

- ETNO n.d. Oikeus kuulua joukkoon – Ehdotuksia monikulttuuristen nuorten yhteenkuuluvuuden vahvistamiseksi suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa. Etnisten suhteiden neuvottelukunta ETNO. Retrieved 16.11.2020 from <https://oikeusministerio.fi/documents/1410853/4737829/ETNO+raportti+Oikeus+kuulua+joukkoon/ec1c55cd-e547-3480-efab-63ff31d07446/ETNO+raportti+Oikeus+kuulua+joukkoon.pdf>
- EUR-Lex 2004. Document 52004DC0412. Komission tiedonanto neuvostolle, Euroopan parlamentille, Euroopan talous- ja sosiaalikomitealle sekä alueiden komitealle - Laillisen ja laittoman maahanmuuton välisiä yhteyksiä koskeva tutkimus. Retrieved 18.11.2020 from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/fi/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52004DC0412>
- European Commission n.d. Children in migration. EU actions to protect children in migration. Retrieved 24.9.2020 from [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child/children-migration\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child/children-migration_en)
- European Commission n.d. Migration and Home Affairs. Country responsible for asylum application (Dublin). Retrieved 20.10.2020 from [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2011. Fundamental Rights of Migrants in irregular situation in the European Union. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved 15.10.2020 from [https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/1827-FRA\\_2011\\_Migrants\\_in\\_an\\_irregular\\_situation\\_EN.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/1827-FRA_2011_Migrants_in_an_irregular_situation_EN.pdf)
- Eurostat 2016. Asylum in the EU Member States Record number of over 1.2 million first time asylum seekers registered in 2015. Retrieved 12.10.2020 from <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7203832/3-04032016-AP-EN.pdf/790eba01-381c-4163-bcd2-a54959b99ed6>
- Finnish Government 2019. Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society: Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government 2019. Retrieved 25.10.2020 from <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/marin/government-programme>
- Freeman, M. 2017. Human Rights. Third edition. Cambridge: Polity. Ebsco Ebook Collection. 11.10.2020. From <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.anna.diak.fi:2048/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxl>

YmtfXzE1NjIwNzJfX0FO0?sid=33196807-7d84-4bb7-9e2c-8a1efc1b45e1@pdc-v-sessmgr06&vid=0&format=EK&rid=1

- Gee, G.C. & Ford L.C. 2011. STRUCTURAL RACISM AND HEALTH INEQUITIES: Old Issues, New Directions. Retrieved 16.10.2020 from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4306458/>
- Glenwick, D. & Jason, L. 2016. Handbook of Methodological Approaches to Community-Based Research: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from: <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.anna diak.fi:2048/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=d65fd0ab-7fc8-4c5d-98bc-f5e638dc642f%40sdc-v-sessmgr02&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=nlebk&AN=1088927>
- Hearn, J. & Bergos, M. 2011. Latin American cleaners fight for survival: lessons for migrant activism. Institution of Race Relations. Retrieved 23.10.2020 from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0306396811406782>
- Helsinki Deaconess Foundation n.d.a. Code of Conduct.
- Hiltunen, A. 2019. Euroopan porteilla. Turvapaikkapolitiikan vaikeat vaiheet. Gaudamus: Tallinn.
- International Organization for Migration 2017. MIGRATION HEALTH IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: ‘Leave No One Behind’ in an increasingly mobile society. The UN Migration Agency. Retrieved 23.10.2020 from [https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our\\_work/ICP/MProcesses/Migration-and-Health-in-SDGs-MHD-factsheet.pdf](https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/ICP/MProcesses/Migration-and-Health-in-SDGs-MHD-factsheet.pdf)
- Itzhaky, H. 2003. Developing Empowerment and Leadership: The Case of Immigrant Women in Israel. Retrieved 10.10.2020 from <https://journals-sagepub-com.anna diak.fi/doi/pdf/10.1177/0886109903254580>
- Jönsson, J. 2014. Local Reactions to Global Problems: Undocumented Immigrants and Social Work. The British Journal of Social Work. Volume 44: June 2014. Retrieved 16.10.2020 from <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcu042>
- Kalm-Akubardia M. 2019. Paperittomana lapsiperheenä Moskovassa. Idäntutkimus. Retrieved 12.9.2020 from <https://journal.fi/idantutkimus/article/view/88845>



- Keränen, S. 2019. Paperittomat elävät Suomessa varjoysteiskunnassa. Apu. Retrieved 24.10.2020 from <https://www.apu.fi/artikkelit/paivan-apu-1-4-2019-paperittomat-muodostavat-suomessa-varjoyhteiskunnan>
- Kerwin, D. & Warren, R. 2018. National Interests and Common Ground in the US Immigration Debate: How to Legalize the US Immigration System and Permanently Reduce Its Undocumented Population. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*. Retrieved 23.10.2020 from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/233150241700500205>
- Korniloff, M. & Laine, M. 2014. Paperittoman lapsen oikeus perusopetukseen. Retrieved 9.10.2020 from [http://www.paperittomat.fi/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/paperittomanlapsen\\_oikeusperusopetukseen\\_julkaisu\\_VALMIS.pdf](http://www.paperittomat.fi/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/paperittomanlapsen_oikeusperusopetukseen_julkaisu_VALMIS.pdf)
- Kosonen, P. 2019. "Tuntuu, että en jaksa enää", sanoo paperiton Aljoarin Adnan – Paperittomia löydetään koko ajan lisää Suomesta. YLE. Retrieved 24.10.2020 from <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-10921851>
- Leavy, P. 2017. *Research design: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches*. New York: Guilford Publications. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/diak/reader.action?docID=4832778>
- Leonard, J. 1997. *Community building: Values for sustainable future*. Greenwood Publishing Group. Retrieved 11.10.2020 from [https://web-b-ebshost-com.anna.diak.fi/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzE4MjI3MF9fQU41?sid=9107fb2d-a6ab-426e-981b-0c7459d39b04%40pdc-v-sessmgr05&vid=4&format=EB&lpid=lp\\_53&rid=0](https://web-b-ebshost-com.anna.diak.fi/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzE4MjI3MF9fQU41?sid=9107fb2d-a6ab-426e-981b-0c7459d39b04%40pdc-v-sessmgr05&vid=4&format=EB&lpid=lp_53&rid=0)
- Mäki, G. 2020. Helsingin Diakonissalaitoksen Säätiö. Väliraportti Suojattomat hanke.
- Markkanen, K. 2018. Tuhansien Paperittomien maa. Iso Nro. Retrieved 20.9.2020 from <https://www.isonumero.fi/1852-2/>
- Maya-Jariego, I. & Armitage, N. n.d. Multiple Senses of Community in Migration and Commuting. *The Interplay between Time, Space and Relations* Retrieved 10.10.2020 from <https://journals-sagepub-com.anna.diak.fi/doi/pdf/10.1177/0268580907082259>

- McMillan, D. & Chavis, D. 1986. Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology*. American Psychological Association. Retrieved 2.8.2020 from <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1987-03834-001>
- McNevin, A. 2011. *Contesting Citizenship: Irregular Migrants and New Frontiers of the Political*. Columbia University Press. Retrieved 23.10.2020 from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/diak/detail.action?docID=908824>
- Merry, L.; Pelaez, S. & Edwards, N. 2017. Refugees, asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants and the experience of parenthood: a synthesis of the qualitative literature. *Globalization and health* 75/2017. Retrieved 13.10.2020 from <https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12992-017-0299-4>
- Mikkola, S. 2019. Paperittomuutta voi vähentää vain tietoa ja tukea tarjoamalla. *Janus* vol 27 (1) 2019. Retrieved 12.9.2020 from <https://journal.fi/janus/article/view/70032/40490>
- Ministry of Interior Finland 2016. TOIMENPIDESUUNNITELMA LAITTOAMAN MAASSA OLESKELUN EHKÄISYYN JA HALLINTAAN. Sisäministeriö. Retrieved 19.10.2020 from <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10616/1266558/TpsuunnitelmaLAMA.pdf/c5b16a1b-8418-4fe0-a3ba-3fe3663ef67f>
- Ministry of the Interior Finland n.d. Maahanmuutto. Turvapaikanhakijat ja pakolaiset. Retrieved 12.10.2020 from <https://intermin.fi/maahanmuutto/turvapaikanhakijat-ja-pakolaiset>
- Non-discrimination ombudsman. Syrjintä ja yhdenvertaisuus. Rasismi. Retrieved 16.10.2020 from <https://syrjinta.fi/rasismi>
- O'Byrne, D. 2013. *Human Rights: An Introduction*. London: Routledge. Ebsco Ebook Collection 11.10.2020. From <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/anna.diak.fi:2048/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzgwMDAwMF9fQU41?sid=912d15cb-b054-4f78-ae53-8cf19d8e9964@pdc-v-sessmgr05&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1>
- OHCHR 2020. The Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 7. Retrieved 19.10.2020 from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- OHCHR 2020a. International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965. Article 1. Retrieved 19.10.2020 from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cerd.aspx>

- OHCHR 2020b. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966. Article 12. Retrieved 19.10.2020 from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>
- OHCHR n.d. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 25. Retrieved 19.10.2020 from [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR\\_Translations/eng.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf)
- OHCHR n.d.a. The Right to Health. Fact sheet no. 31. Retrieved 19.10.2020 from <https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/factsheet31.pdf>
- Oja, A. 2019. Paperittomat sosiaalityön muutoskysymyksenä. Pro Gradu-tutkielma. Itä-Suomen yliopisto. Retrieved 5.10.2020 from [https://epublications.uef.fi/pub/urn\\_nbn\\_fi\\_uef-20190251/urn\\_nbn\\_fi\\_uef-20190251.pdf](https://epublications.uef.fi/pub/urn_nbn_fi_uef-20190251/urn_nbn_fi_uef-20190251.pdf)
- Padgett, D. 2008. Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research. US: Sage Publishing.
- Paperittomuudesta. Paperittomat Suomessa. Paperittomat hanke; tietoa paperittomuudesta ja oikeudellista neuvontaa. Retrieved 20.9.2020 from [http://www.paperittomat.fi/?page\\_id=686](http://www.paperittomat.fi/?page_id=686)
- Perreira, K. & Ornelas, I. 2014. Painful Passages: Traumatic Experiences and Post-Traumatic Stress among Immigrant Latino Adolescents and their Primary Caregivers. Retrieved 21.10.2020 from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3875301/>
- PICUM 2013. Children First and Foremost. A guide to realising the rights of children and families in an irregular migration situation. Retrieved 24.9.2020 from [https://picum.org/Documents/Publi/2013/Children\\_First\\_and\\_Foremost.pdf](https://picum.org/Documents/Publi/2013/Children_First_and_Foremost.pdf)
- PICUM n.d. Why 'undocumented' or 'irregular'? Retrieved 16.9.2020 from [https://www.unhcr.org/cy/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2018/09/TerminologyLeaflet\\_EN\\_PICUM.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/cy/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2018/09/TerminologyLeaflet_EN_PICUM.pdf)
- Puhto, S. 2019. Tällaista on paperittoman elämä Suomessa: ”Lapseni tottuivat siihen, että he eivät ole oikeutettuja mihinkään”. Seura. Retrieved 24.10.2020 from <https://seura.fi/asiat/ajankohtaista/tallaista-on-paperittoman-elama-suomessa-lapseni-tottuvat-siihen-etta-he-eivat-ole-oikeutettuja-mihinkaan/>
- Repo-Saeed, N. 2020. Toivosta ja toivottomuudesta: paperiton asiakas avunsaajana. Bachelor thesis: Diaconia University of Applied Sciences. [https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/337779/Repo-Saeed\\_Nora.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y](https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/337779/Repo-Saeed_Nora.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y)

- Ruggeri, K.; Garcia-Garzon, E.; Maguire, Á.; Matz, S. & Huppert, F. n.d. Well-being is more than happiness and life satisfaction: a multidimensional analysis of 21 countries. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*. Retrieved 29.9.2020 from <https://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=b777eef8-87b9-413b-8b39-a2677c919ef5%40sessionmgr4006>
- Sakslin, M. 2014. The Office of Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland. Kunnan tulee järjestää perusopetusta kaikille kunnassa asuville lapsille. Retrieved 9.10.2020 from <https://www.oikeusasiamies.fi/fi/-/kunnan-tulee-jarjestaa-perusopetusta-kaikille-kunnassa-asuville-lapsille>
- Sanchez, G. 2018. *Critical Perspectives on Clandestine Migration Facilitation: An Overview of Migrant Smuggling Research*. University of Texas at El Paso. Retrieved 23.10.2020 from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/233150241700500102>
- Sandalio, R. N. 2018. *Life After Trauma: Mental Health Needs of Asylum Seekers in Europe*. Retrieved 21.20.2020 from <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/life-after-trauma-mental-health-needs-asylum-seekers-europe>
- Tedeschi, M. 2020. *On the ethical dimension of irregular migrants' lives: Affect, becoming and information*. University of Turku. Retrieved 22.10.2020 from <https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820620940062>
- The Ministry of the Interior Finland 2013. *Maahanmuuton tulevaisuus 2020 – työryhmän ehdotus*. Retrieved 18.10.2020 from <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/79043/Maahanmuuton%20tulevaisuus%202020%20-%20ty%c3%b6ryhm%c3%a4n%20ehdotus.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- The World Bank 2013. *Inclusion Matters*. The Foundation for Shared Prosperity. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/ The World Bank: Washington DC. Retrieved 21.10.2020 from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/16195/9781464800108.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- THL 2020. *Hyvinvointi- ja terveyserot*. Hyvinvointi. Retrieved 2.8.2020 from <https://thl.fi/fi/web/hyvinvointi-ja-terveyserot/eriarvoisuus/hyvinvointi>
- Timonen S. 2017. Näin lietsotaan vihaa. *Blogiteksti Apu*. Retrieved 18.11.2020 from <https://blogit.apu.fi/uuninpankkopoikasakutimonen/2017/11/21/nain->

lietsotaan-vihaa/?\_ga=2.209944853.1043574488.1605694939-471687797.1603527673

- Todorov, E. 2014. Maassa laittomasti oleskelevien paperittomien siirtolaisten oikeusasema Euroopan ihmisoikeustuomioistuimen näkökulmasta. Pro Gradu research: Tampere University.  
<https://trepo.tuni.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/96136/GRADU-1411973985.pdf?sequence=1>
- UNDP 2019. Scaling fences: Voices of irregular African migrants to Europe. Retrieved 23.10.2020 from file:///C:/Users/KYTTJ~1/AppData/Local/Temp/UNDP-Scaling-Fences-EN-2019.pdf
- UNESCO 1995. Legal Instruments. Declaration of principles on tolerance. Retrieved 12.11.2020 from [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13175&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html#:~:text=Declaration%20of%20Principles%20on%20Tolerance%3A%20UNESCO&text=1.1%20Tolerance%20is%20respect%2C%20acceptance,of%20thought%2C%20conscience%20and%20belief](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13175&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html#:~:text=Declaration%20of%20Principles%20on%20Tolerance%3A%20UNESCO&text=1.1%20Tolerance%20is%20respect%2C%20acceptance,of%20thought%2C%20conscience%20and%20belief).
- UNHCR n.d. Regulation establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national. Retrieved 20.10.2020 from <https://www.unhcr.org/4a9d13d59.pdf>
- United Nations Global Compact principles. The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact. Retrieved 22.9.2020 from <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles>
- Vlieks, C.; Ballin, E.H. & Vela, M.J.R. 2017. Solving statelessness: Interpreting the right to nationality. Retrieved 22.10.2020 from <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0924051917722222>
- Wigfield, A. & Turner, R. 2010. Good Relations Measurement Framework. Equality and Human Rights Commission: UK. Retrieved 21.10.2020 from <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-60-good-relations-measurement-framework.pdf>
- YLE 2018. Sotilaat avuksi jengirikollisuuden kitkemisessä Ruotsissa? Pääministeri avoin ajatukselle, puoluetoverit torjuvat. Retrieved 23.10.2020 from <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-10028169>

YLE 2018b. Sisäministeri Mykkänen: Tarvitaan lähiöpoliiseja, jotta Ruotsin kaltainen jengiväkivalta ei leviä Suomeen – "Pitää saada puukko pois kädestä ennen kuin sillä isketään". Retrieved 23.10.2020 from <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-10355046>

## APPENDIX 1. Consent form for interview participants

### INTERVIEW PERMISSION

#### THE QUESTION OF WELLBEING IN UNDOCUMENTED FAMILIES IN FINLAND – THESIS REPORT

My name is Anne-Mari Aalto-Samateh, and I am a student from Diaconia University of Applied sciences. I am currently working on my master thesis on the wellbeing of undocumented immigrants in Finland. This interview will also provide data on Helsinki Deaconess Foundations Unprotected community project's final report.

The participation on this interview is totally anonymous and voluntary. The data collected will only be used in my thesis report and in the Unprotected community projects final report. Any kind of identity information is not gathered during the interview and all data will be analysed and transformed in a form so that all the participants will stay anonymous. The publications will be written in a way that no individual can be identified. The interview will be recorded in order for me to transcribe and analyse it afterwards. When the data is no longer needed, it will be dismantled in appropriate way.

By signing this form, you give me permission to use the information I gain from this interview in my thesis report and in the Unprotected community projects final report.

In Helsinki

/ 08 / 2020

---

## APPENDIX 2. Interview question form

Suojattomat-yhteisöhanke

Haastattelu loppuraporttiin, asiakkaat

Taustakysymykset

Ikä

Sukupuoli

Milloin tullut Suomeen?

Onko sinulla joskus ollut oleskelulupa?

Syy mahdollisen oleskeluluvan menettämiseen? (vapaaehtoinen)

Kuinka kauan tai kuinka usein olet käyttänyt Al Amal-keskuksen palveluita?

Mitä apua olet saanut Al Amal-keskuksesta?

Mitä hyötyä Al Amal-keskuksen palveluista on sinulle ollut?

Miten saamasi apu on vaikuttanut elämääsi?

Onko tilanteesi muuttunut Al Amalista saamasi avun myötä?

Jos kyllä, niin kuvaile miten?

Mitä apua ja tukea tarvitset tilanteessasi jota et ole saanut Al Amalista?

Mitä voimavaroja perheelläsi on?

Mikä auttaa jaksamaan arjessa ja prosessissa?

Mikä arjessa on hyvin? Mihin olette tyytyväisiä?

Millaisia verkostoja perheelläsi on?

Mistä saatte tukea?

Mitä haluaisit kertoa tilanteestasi yleisesti – mihin toivot muutosta?